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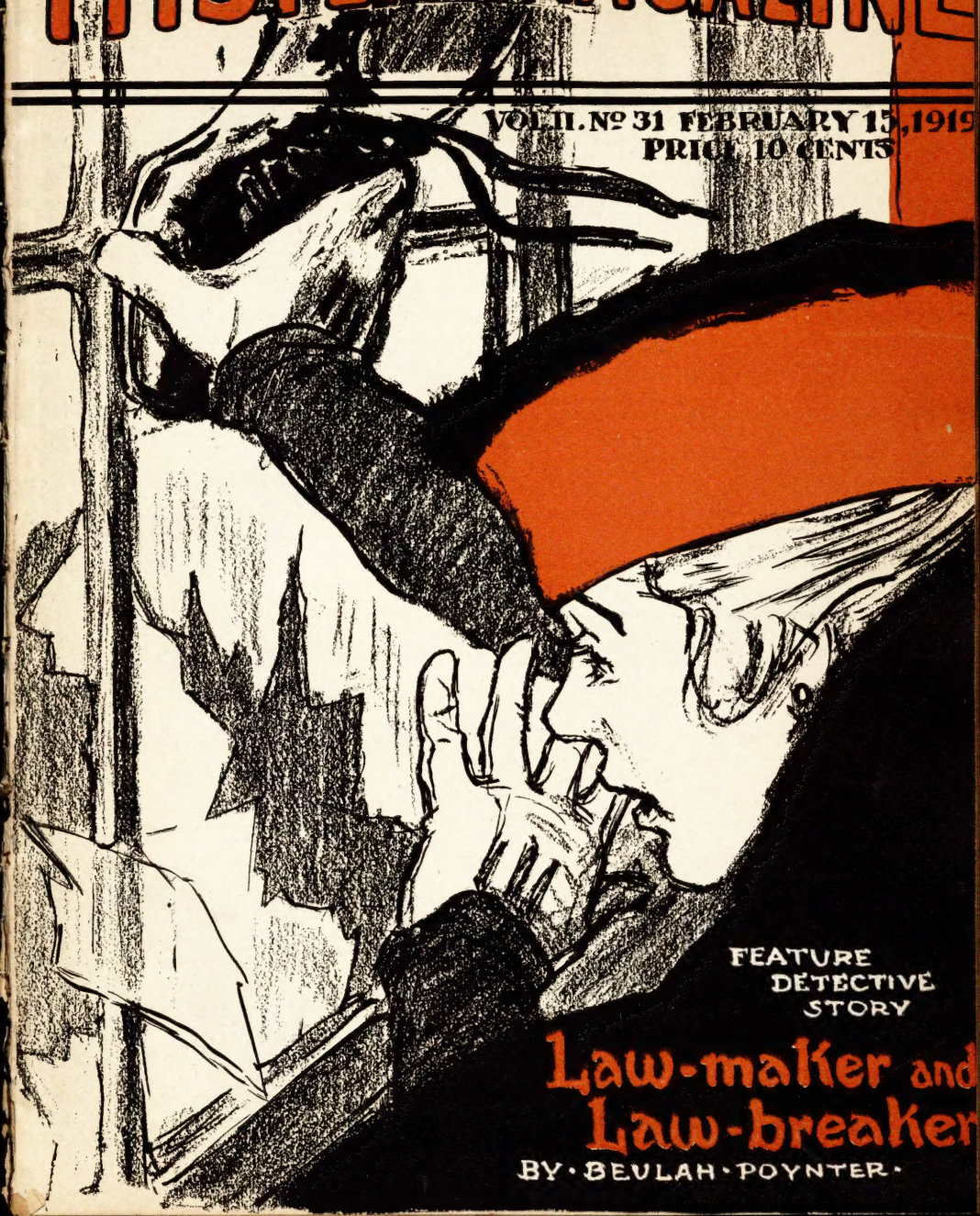

FEATURE DETECTIVE STORY

Law-maker and Law-breaker

BY · BEULAH · POYNTER ·

Read Our Next New Feature Story, Entitled "THE COUNTERFEIT HEIRESS."

MYSTERY MAGAZINE

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LAW-MAKER AND LAW-BREAKER

By BEULAH POYNTER

CHAPTER ONE

A MIDNIGHT VISITOR

ABRUPTLY flinging aside his half-smoked cigarette, the man at the fireplace stood taut, listening, in the semi-darkness of the room. Some one was fumbling at the knob of the door. The family had gone to the theater and might be returning; but this was the curious, hesitant sound of uncertainty and caution. Noiselessly, quickly, the man stepped behind the heavy velvet portieres which draped the windows, and a distant clock boomed out eleven times.

Slowly, stealthily, the door opened. A small, boyish figure darted into the room, was for an instant outlined by the glow of the firelight, then was lost in the semi-darkness.

The watching man quietly, with no undue haste, stepped from his hiding-place and laid a detaining hand on the slim shoulder of his visitor. There was a short struggle, with a muttered "Hell!" from the caller—and silence. Still gripping the small figure, the man reached for an electric switch and flooded the room with light. His prisoner wriggled uneasily and pulled the close-fitting cap farther over his face. The man took off the cap and turned the other's face full to the glare of the light.

"Well!" he exclaimed. Despite the worn overalls, rough short coat and close-cropped hair, femininity was stamped all over his captive. There was a roguish glint in the bright gray eyes that met his unflinchingly, a merry twinkle that disarmed him, despite her obvious lawlessness. A half-smile lurked about a wide but well-curved mouth, and the small upturned nose covered with numerous freckles was pugnacious to a degree.

Adam Kent, a slim, dark man with a touch of gray at the temples, found himself smiling as he questioningly repeated "Well?"

A struggle to break loose was his only reply. He gripped the small shoulder tighter and waited.

"Ah, go on—have a heart; pick on one your own size!" the girl cried, looking up at him wickedly. "Gee! You've got the iron mitts!"

"Did I hurt you?" he said, loosing his hold somewhat. He was a tall man and towered head and shoulders above her. His dark eyes, however, were alive with suspicion.

"Well, I'm glad it's my *shoulder* you're holding, not my wind-pipe," she replied. "I wouldn't give thirty cents for my breath if it wasn't." She spoke with a slight Irish accent and in a well-modulated, musical voice, greatly at variance with her incongruous appearance. Her tone was flippant and her smile brave, but Adam could feel her trembling violently under his grasp.

"What's the idea?" he said.

"Huh?" she answered.

"You understand," he replied. "What do you mean by breaking into our apartment at this hour of the night, when the family are out?"

The girl blinked at him and swallowed twice before replying:

"Didn't break in. Your door wasn't locked."

"Come, come!" Kent was becoming impatient. It was all very well to be gentle, because his thief was a girl; but her complacency, forced or real, was irritating. He was tired, and had been on the verge of retiring before she put in her uninvited appearance.

All her impudence vanished. She seemed to crumple. Almost pitifully she turned to him as she said, in a painful attempt at keeping up her pose:

"I'm scared purple! Honest, I am. My knees are shaking so hard they're knockin' the skin off their own shins; but I ain't a thief—honest to Gawd, I ain't a thief."

He loosed his hold on her and, nodding toward a large arm chair, bade her be seated.

She thanked him painfully and slumped rather than sat in its luxurious depths. Her head drooped wearily and she looked wan and worn. Her small face was deathly white in contrast to the vivid red of her hair and the dark coloring of the upholstery which framed her small figure. Her host seated himself opposite to her and for several seconds stared at her in silence.

"Suppose you tell me all about it," he said at last. "If you didn't come here to rob me, why are you here at all?"

"If I tell you the truth—the Gawd's truth—you'll believe me?"

He shrugged his shoulders. "Suppose you tell me first," he said.

She hesitated a moment, then, reaching in her pocket, pulled out a tobacco sack, weighed it for a moment in her two hands and flung it toward him. She missed her aim and it fell to the floor with a curious, rattling sound.

Kent started. His eyes met those of his visitor's. For an instant the bag lay on the floor between them as the glance was exchanged, then Adam Kent reached abruptly for it, and with trembling fingers endeavored to untie the cord. It was knotted in several places, and his fingers seemed all thumbs. A reading lamp stood on a library table in the center of the room, and he placed the sack under its mellow light, while he strove unsuccessfully to loosen the tangle. The girl coughed apologetically.

He smiled, and, drawing a small knife from his pocket, cut the string. An exclamation of surprise burst from him as the cord separated and the contents of the bag tumbled out upon the shiny surface of the table. Intense astonishment leaped into his eyes as a sparkling, scintillating mass of crystal blinked up at him, casting their own reflection on the black smoothness upon which they lay. Myriads of tantalizing lights met his eyes, yellow and red, blue, green, amethyst, orange—all glowing as with a living fire.

The girl in the huge armchair studied his face through half-closed eyes, which held no desire, none of the worship for the stones which his own face showed. In fact, there was an expression about her mouth that spoke of repugnance, as though the diamonds were repellant to her in their cold beauty. But the man passed his hands lovingly over the small fortune which lay before him, a curious light in his dark eyes.

"The missing jewels!" he exclaimed, and there was a question in the look he turned on her.

These jewels, which belonged to Adam Kent's mother, had disappeared over a month before, and had caused no end of newspaper talk. Liberal rewards had been offered, but the robbery had baffled the police and private detectives. To date, no trace of either thief or stones had been found. The diamonds had vanished. One evening, while all the Kents but Adam were dining in the restaurant of the apartment hotel in which they lived, they had been robbed. The thief seemingly had come and gone as a breath of air, leaving no clue of any sort as to himself or the manner of his coming. And the beautiful Kent diamonds had seemed absolutely to vanish. Several other jewel robberies were reported simultaneously. Two other guests in the hotel were also sufferers. It was a curious fact that other precious stones of considerable value had been untouched and only the diamonds purloined. This led the police to believe all the robberies had been committed by the same person or persons. Here every clue ended.

And now a small girl in rough coat and overalls had returned them.

The stones winked sardonically, wickedly, at Adam Kent, as though daring any one to learn their secret. The man seemed to study them intently. Directly he turned to his visitor. A little uncertain as to what he should do, he stood for a moment watching her. Very small and childish she looked, lying crumpled-up in the big velvet chair, her small head with its tumbled mass of short, red curls drooping onto her slim, rough-clad arm. Pitifully frail—yet sophisticated; a world-scarred little street Arab she was; yet about her there clung an aroma of sweetness, a hint of purity unmistakable.

"Poor little tyke," the man muttered. There was a decanter of wine on the table before him. He poured out a glass and gave it to her. She sputtered, strangled, then swallowed it. Afterward she stared about the room with its luxurious appointments, with its glowing fireplace and artistic paintings; then she looked into the face of the man before her. She smiled a smile which changed her entire countenance and half whispered:

"Gee, you've got a grand place! Don't you just like to live here?"

Adam Kent paid no heed to her question, but, lifting the diamonds, he held them out before her.

"I'm waiting for you to explain these," he said. She drew back and into her eyes crept an expression of terror as she thrust them aside.

"Take 'em away!" she cried. "I hate 'em! Take 'em where I can't see 'em, and I'll tell you all about 'em."

He replaced the stones in the bag, lingering over each bauble as he dropped it in. After he had retied the sack she began her story in a dull, colorless monotone.

The story told by the little stranger was all but unbe-

lievable. He seemed to accept it as true, even as he had apparently accepted the girl. His keen brown eyes, alert to every expression on her face, held a strange appearance as she gave an explanation regarding her possession of the jewels.

He leaned back in the chair, facing her, his keen, dark eyes alert to every expression on her piquant little face. As he grew interested in her recital he ran his fingers nervously through his thick, dark hair, just tinged with gray on the temples. It was a way he had when anything held his attention, and the girl's curious, almost unbelievable story interested him intensely. An incredulous smile crept about his well-formed mouth and it irritated the girl, for she cried out indignantly:

"If you ain't going to believe me, I won't tell you any more."

He bade her continue her story, promising to accept all she said as the truth. Now and then he interrupted her with a pertinent question, but for the most part he listened breathlessly to the story she told.

His attitude put the little stranger at ease, and, finding she had a sympathetic listener in the big, aristocratic-looking man, she poured into his ears more than she had intended to tell of her own history—more than was at all relevant to the mystery of the diamonds.

"And after all my trouble to get here"—she concluded whimsically—"if here wasn't you, and, believe me, you've got the strong arm! I'm wonderin' if your heart is as hard as your muscles."

"What do you really think about it?" he asked. She drooped one eyelid in a half-inquisitive wink, then her large, expressive mouth quivered. A hint of a sob was in her low voice as she replied: "I think you're grand—just grand."

"Twelve o'clock," he exclaimed.

"It's awful late," said the girl; "I've got to be goin'." She attempted to rise, but dropped from sheer exhaustion. Something about the glisten of her eyes and her mouth, now vividly red, prompted him to take her hand in his. It was feverishly hot, although she seemed to be shivering.

"I don't think you're very well, Miss—er——" he hesitated.

"My name's Janie Ladd," she said.

"Are you cold, Janie Ladd?"

She nodded assent. "I'm shivery-like, but I don't know if it's cause I'm cold or scared."

For reply he assisted her to rise and led her to the fireplace, where she sank back luxuriously into a comfortable divan ornamented with pillows. For a moment she closed her eyes. The glow of the firelight falling full upon her face made an aureole of gold of the reddish hair and gave to her pale face a youthful, softening flush. Under his consideration the hardness had vanished, leaving a soft feminine charm, wonderfully childish and sweet.

"You're a pretty kid!" he exclaimed in admiration. She sat bolt upright, the gray eyes steely as they met his.

"If you talk like that, I'm goin'," she said.

"Why, I was simply admiring you."

"Bein' admired means bein's got fresh with," she said with finality. Kent laughed, then quietly said:

"I beg your pardon." He was desirous of detaining her until his family returned. He could imagine his mother's well-bred surprise at the quaint figure in overalls, his sister Phyllis' overwhelming curiosity and his well-poised, *blasé* father for once shaken out of his habitual languor. They had gone to a reception but, as Mrs. Kent had an aversion to late hours, Adam knew they would soon be returning.

Just as he was beginning to draw the girl from the shell of reserve into which she had retired at his admiration and to induce her to tell him more about herself, he heard them in the hallway.

With a thrilling song on her lips, Phyllis Kent, an attractive girl of twenty, flung open the door and entered, followed by her parents.

There was a moment of strained silence as she saw the room occupied by other than her brother, whom she had supposed to be asleep—a gasp when she realized the visitor was a girl; then nonchalantly she said:

"What's the idea?"

Mrs. Kent sank into a chair, bewildered, horrified, while Stephen Kent's cold gray eyes glittered in a manner more indicative of dismay or perturbation than surprise.

"This is Miss Janie Ladd," Adam said, introducing them. A twinkle in his keen brown eyes showed how he enjoyed the situation. Janie bowed painfully, but the others forebore to acknowledge the introduction, curiosity overcoming good breeding.

Before Adam could explain the girl's presence, Phyllis espied the glittering baubles lying on the library table. She gave an exclamation and almost pounced upon them. That a strange girl in male attire had invaded their home at night was of small moment where the missing jewels were concerned.

"Look, mommy, look!" she gasped.

Mrs. Kent greedily turned toward her and almost hungrily lifted one sparkling ornament after another.

The little visitor stood wide-eyed, watching them, her unusual appearance more incongruous than ever in comparison to the richly gowned figures of the two women. Almost as greedily as Mrs. Kent fingered her regained property did Janie's keen eyes devour every detail of their costumes. She mentally figured the price of the gown Phyllis wore, and tabulated it "Fifth Avenue." It was something of a shock to her when she realized that the other girl had red hair, like herself. Only the other's curls were marcel waves cunningly introduced by a hairdresser and skillful manipulation of irons. Her eyes, wandering from one woman to another, were finally drawn toward the silent, white-faced man who had never ceased to stare at her from the moment he had become conscious of her presence.

Her wide gray eyes met those of Stephen Kent fearlessly; unblinking, they stared at each other—looking deep, deep into soul for soul. A misty film appeared before her. His well-groomed, debonair figure in the conventional dress suit seemed to vanish—all she saw was his eyes—cold, glittering, sinister, green-gray eyes which never wavered, but held hers by their baleful gleam, as a cat's holds a bird's. Somewhere in her subconscious mind she had a vision of having seen those eyes before.

As the man straightened up abruptly, withdrawing his stare, she came to a realization of her surroundings and to the fact that Adam Kent was explaining her presence and that of the jewels.

CHAPTER TWO

ANOTHER ROBBERY

A MASSIVE, shaggy hulk of a giant lurched suddenly sideways as he strove to avoid coming into contact with the man facing him, but in side-stepping he overbalanced himself and fell plumb against the person he sought to avoid.

"Look where you're going, can't you?" he exclaimed angrily.

The lights from the hotel windows illuminated the street upon which they stood, and the features of both were plainly discernible, the immaculate, well-dressed person of the younger man contrasting with the coarse, bloated vulgarity of the other.

The half-drunken man, reeking with bad liquor, fear and astonishment, blinked uneasily as he looked down upon the man he had so nearly knocked off the sidewalk.

"Beg yer pardon," he muttered. "Beg your pardon. I didn't see you."

The gentleman adjusted his hat, which had been knocked awry, passed him and went into the hotel lobby, where he went to the cigar counter and purchased a cigar. After lighting it, he stepped outside again, his footsteps making a crunching sound on the frozen snow as he walked away from the watching man.

Taking the other's example, the huge man also entered the revolving door which led into the lobby. The brilliant lights dazed him for a moment, and the heat in the room caused the bad liquor he had drunk to make him dizzy. He swayed unsteadily for a second, then noticing some swinging doors at one side of the lobby he recognized a bar and headed directly for it. It was practically deserted. The bartender, a sleepy-eyed man, glanced at the clock as he entered, and seeing it still lacked a few minutes of one o'clock poured out the stiff drink of whisky he demanded.

Lem Ladd was determined to tell him his troubles, but the bartender paid little heed to his querulous guest, and went about his business of preparing to close for the night.

"What d'ye think of it?" Ladd muttered over his glass. "Run away and left me—left me after I've allus been kind to her, and I couldn't find her no place—asked Mrs. Cullen—Mrs. Cullen's my neighbor—yessir, a good neighbor—and she says—what did she say? Oh, yes—somebody stole her boy Jimmy's overalls. Somebody saw Janie—my girl Janie—in overalls. I'm smart, I am—I says that's Jimmy's overalls she's wearin'. What for, says I? Which way did she go?—says I. But I knowed. Yes, sir—I put two and two together and I knowed where she went and why she went, and I followed her—and she's here, she is! Yes, sir—my girl Janie is here—upstairs with them swells!"

The bartender cut short his recitals by ejecting him from the room, and the loquacious guest dropped upon a bellhop's seat in the corridor and sank into a drunken stupor unnoticed by the night clerk or the boy on duty.

During the recital of Janie's story she was completely ignored. Effacing herself, she curled up among the gold and black cushions of the divan and reveled in the beauty of her surroundings. Imaginative, artistic to her fingertips, she appreciated the luxury about her as few in any strata of life would have done. Realizing that perhaps this was her one and only opportunity to be part and parcel of a rich man's home, she gave full rein to her emotions. The wonder of the soft velvet gave her a choky feeling almost sensual in its intensity. The richness of the blending of dull gold and blue in the carpets and draperies, with the hint of black here and there, played upon her sensitive nerves, causing them to vibrate like some high-strung instrument. She longed to finger the satin-covered walls, to feel the keys of the mahogany piano.

A sharp, metallic jangle from the telephone interrupted Adam before he had gone very far into Janie's story. With a murmur of "Excuse me," he answered its call. His "Hello!" ended in a surprised whistle, and Mrs. Kent turned to him, exclaiming nervously:

"What is it?"

"It's McCall," he said, turning to the occupants of the room as he hung up the receiver.

"McCall?" his mother said interrogatively.

"Yes, the house detective. He asked to come up."

"At this time of night! How extraordinary!" exclaimed Mrs. Kent. She almost shrieked the exclamation.

"Put the jewels away, Phyllis," said Adam, turning to his sister, "McCall's visit may have nothing to do with them, and it is too late to go into any unnecessary details regarding them."

Phyllis obeyed him without comment. Mrs. Kent sat as one fascinated while her daughter dropped each jewel separately into the bag. As she tied the string about it Stephen Kent leaned forward and, extending a long, slender hand, said:

"Give the bag to me; I'll take care of the stones for the time being."

An authoritative rap on the door caused Mrs. Kent to start violently and give a hysterical cry.

"Hide them! Hide them!" she gasped. "The thief——"

Her husband gave her a coldly sarcastic glance which spoke volumes and the sentence was unfinished. As if in sympathy with her mother's frayed nerves—which had been ragged to a breaking point by the events of the past month—Phyllis crossed to her and placed a reassuring arm about her shoulders. A tall girl, boyishly slim but girlishly sweet, there was a dominance about her—a wonderful self-possession upon which her mother was wont to rely.

Adam opened the door, admitting the detective. He was accompanied by another man whom he abruptly introduced as O'Rafferty—police headquarters.

"Sorry to disturb you at this hour," he explained in a curt, sharp way he had, "but there's been another robbery—this time on the sixth floor, above you!"

"Oh, my heavens!" shrieked Mrs. Kent. Phyllis's long white fingers dug into her flesh as she pushed her back into her chair.

Stephen Kent gave a startled exclamation. "The sixth floor?" he said.

"Mrs. Prince," the detective further explained. "Thief didn't get much, as she and her husband surprised him in the act. They'd been to the theater and walked in on the fellow. He made a break for the window and got out on the fire escape. Then he vanished! As the fire escape is on the court and the court is closed at night, he didn't get out that way—it's a cinch he found an open window and dodged into it. As soon as I was notified I phoned headquarters—we're searching every apartment in the building."

"Meantime your thief may be miles away," said Adam dryly.

O'Rafferty, who had been silently inspecting the room, turned abruptly and for a second stared unblinkingly at him. His small, yellow-brown eyes narrowed—he gave a low, indrawn whistle, then snapped his fingers impatiently.

There was something about his scrutiny and the intensity of his gaze which irritated Adam.

"Well," he snapped half angrily, "what's the idea?"

"What's your name?" said O'Rafferty.

"Didn't I introduce you?" McCall said quickly. "He's Mr. Adam Kent, son and junior partner in the firm of Kent & Kent."

"Hem!" The tall, raw-boned man from headquarters shook his head with an embarrassed laugh. "You gimme a turn for a minute, but I see the difference now. Shave the mustache off your upper lip and that bit of gray on your side hair, and you're enough like Joe Le Moyne to swing for him."

"Joe Le Moyne?" said Adam, a note of vexation in his voice.

"The man we're after," O'Rafferty replied. He crossed to the window and flung it open, staring down at the street below—now quiet and all but deserted.

"The man we're after," O'Rafferty repeated again. "The man we'll get if we can. He's slippery as an eel and hard to nail anything on."

"And he looks like Adam! Oh, how terrible!" ejaculated Mrs. Kent. "It isn't right that a thief should look like——"

Adam interrupted her.

"What makes you think he is the man? Have you learned something that leads you to believe it?" He looked steadily at the detective.

"Mrs. Prince gave us a pretty graphic description of her thief," the house detective replied. "I never saw Le Moyne myself, so I didn't associate any resemblance with you."

O'Rafferty handed him a small cardboard on which were pasted two photographs of the hunted man—a profile and one of the full face. Adam looked at the pictures for a few moments, his face blushing hotly, then he laughed with curious constraint.

"It would take more imagination than I possess," he said quietly, "to find the resemblance."

"Why, Adam, I can see it!" Phyllis exclaimed, leaning over his shoulder to get a good view of the likeness. "It's as he said—if you were smooth shaven. I know it isn't complimentary to say so, though he appears to be quite handsome."

"Your builds are about the same—height, weight, age and coloring," said O'Rafferty. For all his obvious nationality he was a reserved, very serious man and saw no humor in thus insisting upon a resemblance between a criminal and a lawyer. A thing was, or wasn't, and to him this resemblance was: "Le Moyne wears good clothes and looks like a gentleman!"

"It isn't decent!" Mrs. Kent gasped hysterically after one look at the pictures, but Adam laughed again and returned the card to O'Rafferty, who replaced it in his vest pocket.

When the detectives had entered the room, Janie had slipped out of sight behind the cushions of the huge divan. She was trembling like an aspen leaf and her hands were cold as ice. Hoping against hope that, so long as the detectives did not see her, she and the object of her visit would not be mentioned, she dug her head like an ostrich into the mass of black and gold cushions and waited. Only a word now and then reaching her ears gave her the drift of their conversation. During the excitement of the moment the others had forgotten her, and it was only when the detectives turned to go that McCall's keen eyes espied her, huddled up as she was.

"Hello!" he said. He looked from one to the other of the Kents in askance. Janie's light, tousled hair proclaimed her sex, even if the firelight had not brought into full relief the girlish outlines of her slim trouser-clad figure. For some reason the Kent family had not mentioned her presence in the room, although she had held a dominant place in Adam's thoughts.

"Hello yourself!" she said bravely, blinking gray-green eyes at McCall. Her pugnacious little nose wrinkled up as she drew back her upper lip in a feeble attempt at a white-toothed smile. A certain magnetism about her caused the house detective to smile back at her, although the man from headquarters stood staring at her stolidly, suspicion ever alert.

"Ain't you the newsboy I passed on the stairs?" McCall asked, drawing closer to her.

"Uh-huh." She nodded an emphatic assent.

"Well, you're no boy—what's the idea of the disguise?"

"If you wanted to get somewhere and nothin' but pants would get you there, you'd wear em', wouldn't you?" she chuckled.

"Friend of yours?" O'Rafferty asked abruptly, turning to Stephen Kent.

Before his father could reply, Adam quickly said "Yes."

There was a doubtful expression on the faces of both officers of the law, and McCall said dryly:

"Better can the overalls; they don't get you anything."

"They got me here, and that's more'n skirts would 'a' done," she replied pertly.

"Come on, O'Rafferty," McCall said, starting toward the door. His lanky companion made a move as if to follow him, then hesitated and stared at the girl, one eye closed inquisitively.

"Wait a moment, McCall," he said. "I think I'd like to question this girl a bit."

Adam spoke up quickly, "I have already done so."

"But I haven't," snapped the detective impatiently. "I don't quite get her game."

"I have already vouched for her," said Adam, his face flushed angrily.

The smile on O'Rafferty's face further irritated him, but the officer was not to be balked. He motioned to the girl to be seated and, thrusting his hands deep in his overcoat pockets, he faced her, all the while chewing viciously on the stub of a cigar.

"What's your name?" he inquired first.

"Janie Ladd," she replied, a quaver in her voice.

CHAPTER THREE

JANIE'S STORY

"JANIE LADD?" said O'Rafferty. "Hem! Go on."

Janie looked at Adam imploringly, as though begging his assistance. But he gave her none. Instead, Phyllis impulsively held up the bag of jewels and said:

"She returned our diamonds to us; that is why she is here."

McCall started and abruptly closed the hall door, which he had been holding open. O'Rafferty chuckled.

"I thought so. I scented a mystery the minute I clapped my eyes on her. How'd you get the sparklers, young woman?"

Adam wheeled about quickly, as though he intended speaking, but refrained, and strove unsuccessfully to light a cigarette.

Janie swallowed hard, blinked back two large tears with an effort, then blurted out:

"I ain't a thief. Honest to Gawd, I ain't a thief!"

"I've not accused you, have I?" said O'Rafferty. "S'pose you wait till I do. Now then, tell me all you know about that bag of jewels!"

"Nothing much," she muttered. "I don't know who stole 'em, either—honest, I don't. But, last week they was brought to my step-dad——"

"Your step-dad?" said Stephen Kent, suddenly leaning toward her.

"Yeah, Lem Ladd. Not my own father at all, just the guy my mother married—a no-count loafer—drinks like a fish and——"

"We'll take your word for his character," interrupted

O'Rafferty. "You say some one fetched the sparklers to him?"

"Yeah, the guy that swiped 'em—a young fellow, 'bout—'bout—'bout—oh, I dunno—I didn't see him. Well, he made dad——" she stammered.

"Wait a minute," said O'Rafferty, holding up his hand, "you started to explain the guy's appearance. Go ahead."

Adam started to protest and a peculiar glitter came into his father's eyes. The girl faltered, then said defiantly:

"I didn't see him, I tell yuh; I didn't see anything but his shadow!"

"You said he was young," said McCall, stepping closer to her.

"Well, he was—leastways, I thought so from the way he moved around the room, and his voice and everything. You see, the walls of our flat are mighty thin and you don't have to listen very hard to know what's bein' said in the next room. I don't sleep very well, anyway, since my mother died. I keep a-listening in the night to hear her call for me. You get that way when folks are sick for a long time. Then I got in the habit of being wakeful on account of fires. Dad comes home drunk pretty often when he's out late, and he will smoke his pipe."

O'Rafferty moved uneasily.

"Get down to cases," he said abruptly.

"Well, I am," she snapped back. "Can't you see I'm tryin' to tell you everything—just as I told *him?*"

Adam turned to the officer, making no pretense of his annoyance.

"Now, look here, Mr. O'Rafferty," he said, "the girl has explained everything very satisfactorily to me and I was on the point of telling it to my family when you arrived. Is there any necessity of her going over the entire details again?"

O'Rafferty chewed viciously on his cigar for a moment. The look he gave the young man was fraught with suspicion.

"Just a minute, Mr. Kent," he said. "There's been a reward of a thousand dollars offered for the return of those sparklers—we've all of us been workin' on the case. It ain't human to ask me to have no curiosity about how they got back and everything, when a girl in overalls is the one claiming that reward."

"I'm not claiming any reward!" Janie exclaimed. "Dad had been comin' home late for a week. I didn't know what time it was, 'cause the clock is in the kitchen. But he'd always wake me up. Night before last, I was asleep when he came in and woke me up, same as usual. I was going to say something to him when I heard him talking to somebody with him and the other fellow answered him. At first I didn't tumble to what they was talkin' about. I never dreamed it was the sparklers. The other guy had a sickly-sweet kind of voice—you know the kind—oily, but poisonous as sin, and educated, like Mr. Kent's. I could tell by the way dad spoke to him that he was scared stiff of him."

Stephen Kent leaned forward.

"You didn't see him?" he said.

"No—no," she replied wearily, "ain't I said again and again I didn't? My door was open and once he passed in front of it, and I just seen a long slim figure for a minute, that was all."

With scarcely any interruptions she continued her story. The stranger had urged her stepfather to secrete something for him until the following day when he could call for it. Lem Ladd had been opposed to doing it. The stranger seemingly held something over Ladd's head. At the threat of exposure Ladd had given in, and the man had departed. Ladd had then tumbled into bed in the adjoining room to sleep off his drunken spree. As soon as her stepfather was snoring, and to all accounts dead to the world, Janie had crept out of bed, trembling with cold and excitement, and had hunted until she found the cause of the discussion.

"I figured it 'd be in dad's tobacco jar, 'cause he puts everything there," she said naively, "but, my eye! I thought I'd drop dead when I seen them sparklers! I didn't have to put two and two together to figure out that they was the diamonds the papers had been kickin' up such a rumpus about. Oh, I go in for literature," she boasted, "and newspaper is all I can afford. When I seen them stones a-glitterin', I remembered I'd heard dad and that feller say Kent two or three times, and they mentioned Marlborough Hotel; so it was a cinch who they belonged to. I made up my mind to get 'em to you if I died a-tryin'. Of course, I knew it wouldn't be worth my skin if either of 'em ever had an idea of me playing 'em crooked."

Dreading that her stepfather would discover their loss before she could return them to their rightful owner, she had returned them to the tobacco jar to await morning.

About twelve o'clock of the following day, Ladd had risen, sullen and bleary-eyed. He was surprised to find her at home, for she was employed as a cash girl in a department store down-town, and usually left her work every morning by eight. But she had fixed him an unusually hearty breakfast. He went out to buy some tobacco, leaving her alone for a little while. This was her opportunity. Shaking in her shoes for fear he would return before the deed was accomplished, she snatched the precious package from the tobacco jar and hid it under the mattress of her bed, to await a chance to return it to the owners.

How she was to accomplish this feat she had not considered. That it must be done, she determined, and also that the blame must rest upon a sneak-thief. Numerous encounters with Lem Ladd's fists had taught her the wisdom of this last. It had clearly never entered her mind that any one would accuse her of having committed the robbery, even though the stolen goods were in her possession. She told it all in a naive little way that must have caused any man to term himself a blundering fool for doubting her.

"After I stuck the sparklers under my mattress," she continued, "I done some tall thinkin'. I knew that oily-speakin' guy had murder in his heart for anyone that 'd double-cross him; but if he knew dad at all he'd know he didn't have spunk enough to do it, no matter how much he wanted to. Dad's like an insect; he'll bite you—but it ain't out in the open. Well, I thought and thought, and I didn't have much time to do it in, either. At last I put on my hat and coat and run down to the corner to a bake-shop where I trade once in a while, leaving the door wide open. I had to pass the cigar store, and in it I saw dad buying his tobacco and talkin' big to the clerk. Well, I waited till I saw him leave the store and start for home. I knew what would happen when he got there, as soon as he'd see the door was open he'd make a bee-line for them sparklers, find 'em gone and——"

She made an expressive gesture which somehow included her whole body.

"I figured right. When I reached the flat he was tearin' up like mad. You never seen anything like it. He was just about crazy through fear and he wouldn't let on to me what was wrong, because I wasn't supposed to know what he had lost. Of course, I was innocent as a lamb and couldn't make out what he was ravin' about. It wasn't the first, by a good many times, I had left the

door open—Gawd knows we didn't own nothing anybody wanted to steal." She laughed whimsically.

"After he'd just about busted Webster's dictionary, he beat it to the corner to telephone the guy all about it. Here was my chance—I had to git away now or never. He'd think it was work for mine, you know. I didn't want to get him in trouble, so I jest figured I'd drop in here, put the sparklers where the Kents would find 'em, and run along my merry way!"

"Too bad I interfered in your plan," broke in Adam. "The best laid plans of mice and men——"

"I don't get you," she said.

"Just a saying of no moment," he laughed; but there was an odd note somewhere in the laugh.

Janie had not much more to tell. Aware that it was almost impossible to reach an apartment in the hotel without being announced, and that announcement of her call to the Kents would ruin her scheme and bring disaster about her head, she had impulsively purloined a pair of overalls which hung on a clothesline outside her window, the property of Jimmy Cullen, a neighbor's boy. She figured that, attired as a small boy—her cropped hair and very slight figure well in keeping with the rôle—and armed with some newspapers she might gain access to the building and, under pretense of delivering a daily to Mr. Kent, pass both clerks and elevator boys. Her scheme had worked beautifully. In the lobby she had been hailed by the clerk, demanding what she wanted, and in a deep, throaty contralto she had stated her errand. He had motioned her up the stairs, at the same time telling her the number of their apartment. She had dodged about corridors, waiting until she saw a gentleman and two ladies whom she took to be Mr. and Mrs. Kent and their daughter leave the apartment. Unaware that the Kent family had any other member, she had supposed the rooms empty. Still she had hung around, uncertain as to what was best. She had not, of course, expected to find the door open. Finally she had decided to wrap the sack of jewels in a newspaper and fasten them to the knob of the door, confident they would remain undisturbed until the owners returned and would find them. Something, however, had prompted her to try the door and, finding it unlocked, she had stepped inside, the darkness of the room blinding her after being in the brilliantly lighted hallway.

"There's where I got left!" she added. "The place wasn't empty and I got caught. Oh, well, I should worry!"

There was something inexpressively pathetic about the way she said the slang phrase. Phyllis crossed to her side and impulsively rested her hand on the girl's shoulder.

"Poor little kiddie," she said. "You've had a pretty hard road to travel."

Janie smiled up at her gratefully. "Well, I've not had any molasses stickin' to my shoes to pick up diamonds on the way," she said whimsically.

CHAPTER IV

JANIE MAKES SOME FRIENDS

A SILENCE of several seconds' duration followed Janie's remark. O'Rafferty rose and, kicking his chair, crossed to the door. Stephen Kent followed him, uneasily, but said nothing.

"I guess it's all right," O'Rafferty said. "Goin' to put the sparklers in the vault downstairs?"

"I don't know," said Stephen Kent, uncertainly. "No one knows of their return; it may be just as well to keep them here to-night and avoid any explanations below. It's too late for that now."

"By all means keep them hers," said Adam.

O'Rafferty scratched his head. His left eye dropped, as it had a habit of doing whenever he was puzzled or deeply interested in anything.

"Do as you like about it," he said. "Guess we'll be goin'? We won't be far, if you need us."

"Well, I don't think we should keep the jewels here!" Mrs. Kent burst forth, after the detectives had left the room. "Another robbery, and thieves lurking about in the building! We are just tempting Providence! That's what we are."

Mrs. Kent insisted that all the windows be closed and locked—those opening on the street, as well as the ones which opened onto the court.

Stephen Kent handed the bag of diamonds to his son, saying:

"I'd change the combination of the safe if I were you."

"Oh, yes!" exclaimed his wife; "do change it, and make it a very difficult one!"

Adam laughed. "You'd forget what it was, mother, and not be able to open it yourself."

"You wouldn't forget it, and that would be all that would be necessary," she replied. She did not watch him as he turned the knob of the lock-box, swinging the little safe into view; nor did she pay any heed to the new combination, as he locked the jewels away.

Janie, however, watched him breathlessly. It was all new to her, this talk of lock-boxes, and vaults, and combinations. A bit of Greek, the figures seemed. As her brooding eyes followed the delft movements of Adam's long, aristocratic fingers, she became conscious of Stephen Kent's keen scrutiny again. His gaze seemed to bore her through and through, and she flushed with resentment.

"Well," she stammered; "I gotta go now. I've gotta face the music some time, and now's as good as any." She had not ceased to tremble and grow alternately hot and cold and, as she stood preparatory to leaving, the room seemed to sway with her.

"It's too late for her to venture out alone," Adam said. "We can put her up for the night, can't we, mother?" Mrs. Kent, who was all heart and emotion, seeing that Janie looked unfit, agreed to find a place for the little waif to stay, refusing to allow her to leave their apartment, and Phyllis, finding a prank in housing Janie for the night, declared she could sleep in her "nightie."

Meantime, the room began to grow lumpy to Janie. Queer red and white lights danced before her eyes. Subconsciously, she resented their discussion about her—especially Stephen's calling her "a little beggar"—but, curiously, she felt no desire to defend her position. Generally, she was quick-tempered, and ready to fight at the drop of a hat; but now she was content to be led away by Phyllis, and ushered into a white and gold apartment.

As Phyllis and her little visitor left the room, Adam excused himself, saying he was sleepy, and retired to his room. Immediately, Stephen Kent stepped to the telephone, and again lifted the receiver from the hook.

"Stephen, what are you going to do?" his wife asked quickly. He did not reply to her, but answered in the telephone:

"Hello! Is this the night clerk? Yes, this is Stephen Kent, Apartment 44. Listen, keep a lookout on my floor, will you? Yes, I know O'Rafferty has men covering the building. Well, have him especially watch this apart-

ment; I'll make it worth his while! No. No. I don't know her!"

As he hung up the receiver his wife caught his arm, saying softly: "That was unkind, Stephen; you as much as accused the child."

"Can't be too careful, and her story is pretty thin," he answered impatiently. "You are both sentimentalists, you and Phyllis, and Ad is as well; you've been burnt often enough to fear the fire; but evidently you don't."

She made a gesture of disapproval, which he ignored.

The telephone rang again, and Stephen answered.

"Oh, hello, Mr. O'Rafferty; yes, do that, please. Why—why—yes—we could—ye-es. Thank you; good-by." There was a strange glint in his eyes as he hung up the receiver.

Janie's obvious admiration of her dainty surroundings caused Phyllis to laugh; but the laugh was so full of understanding that the girl looked up at her and chuckled.

Endeavoring to relieve the girl's embarrassment, Phyllis assisted her out of the coat, then went to the bathroom to prepare the tub for her.

"There's a dressing-gown hanging on the foot of the bed," she called to her through the open door; "the color ought to look well on you."

Janie lifted the quilted satin robe from the couch, and laid her face against its soft turquoise folds—running her rough, little hands over its silky, blue satin surface.

"My!" she breathed in ecstasy; "you—you don't sleep in this, do you?"

"Sometimes!" laughed Phyllis; the noise of the running water almost drowning her voice.

"Wrap it about you now, and I'll give you a night-dress."

"I couldn't sleep in it," muttered Janie; "I'd be wantin' to stay awake just to feel of it." She stepped out of her overalls and rough undergarments and, drawing the luxurious mantle about her, joined Phyllis in the bath-room.

"It *is* becoming," said Phyllis. "Will you have your bath salty?"

Janie blinked uncomprehendingly. "I'd rather not," she said; "they make me awful sick."

For a moment Phyllis looked at her in astonishment; then she laughed as she realized the girl's ignorance.

"You adorable little savage!" she said. She flung a handful of the aromatic crystals in the water and, as the perfume greeted Janie's nostrils, she flushed and tried to explain that she didn't know anything anyway.

She was frightfully embarrassed because Phyllis chose to remain in the room while she took her bath, and frankly discussed the beauty and modeling of her flesh.

"You've a wonderful tint in your skin," she said; then she explained that she was an artist.

Little by little, Phyllis led the girl to talk about herself, the sordidness of her home, her life with her step-father, Lem Ladd, and the death of her mother.

"Gee, she was pretty, layin' there, with her hands folded on her bosom, and the wrinkles all gone out of her face. She looked happy; actually happy. I was glad she looked that way, 'cause I never saw her look happy before."

"You loved your mother very much?" Phyllis said softly.

"Sure, she was a peach; she talked real language. She didn't use slang, nor swear-words, like me. I learned 'em from dad; when she was alive, I was more careful, though; but you know how you get kind of careless."

"Yes, I do. Sometimes I'm very slovenly in my English myself.

"You?" Janie poised the cake of scented soap in mid-air, after lathering herself for the third time, because she loved the odor. "You're kiddin'? My mother read a lot, too. She named me out of a book—'Les Miserables'"—she pronounced it 'Less Miserable'—"have you read it?"

"Yes," Phyllis replied quietly.

"Some book! Well, she called me Genevieve Cosette. Cosette's from the book; but it was too big a mouthful at a settin', so now I'm called Janie. I named my pet rooster 'Marius'; but, gee, that was too much for him, and he died under the load."

For a moment she splashed about in the water, paddling in it like a child; then she said suddenly:

"Your brother, he's grand, too."

"Adam?"

"Uhu. He's named after the Bible, ain't he? That's more distinguished than bein' named after 'Les Miserables.'"

"Your name is very pretty, I think; Janie Ladd, it is euphonious."

"Yes'm. It is. Ladd ain't my name, though."

Mrs. Kent opened the door to see what was taking place, just in time to hear Janie's speech and, curiosity being a dominating characteristic, she asked her visitor's "right name."

Janie flushed, feeling sorry she had said so much; then she blurted out:

"I don't know. My mother didn't know."

"What!" shrieked Mrs. Kent. "Phyllis—I——"

"My father told my mother it was Smith, but it wasn't. She wouldn't ever talk about it. Just cried when he was mentioned, and said he wasn't as bad as he might of been. Neither's the devil! Anyway, he was pretty rotten; cause he tricked her into a marriage which wasn't genuine, and then jest 'fore I was born give Lem Ladd a thousand dollars to marry her, so's I'd have a name! Ain't that rich! A name!"

Janie's face became as red as her hair from indignation, and Mrs. Kent's look of horror was lost upon her. All she saw was a pale, pretty mother, brow-beaten by hulking Lem Ladd, her spirit and heart broken by the man who had deceived her.

"Don't say anything, mother, please," Phyllis whispered. "She doesn't realize. Poor, little tyke! And anyway, *she's* to be pitied, not blamed."

She assisted her guest into a billowy, blue night-gown, tucked her vivid red curls into a lace cap, and led her to her bed—the divan which Mrs. Kent had converted into a sleeping-place.

"Oh!" said Janie, as her bare feet sank deep into the nape of the velvet rugs; "it tickles my toes!"

Almost like a little girl, she sprang head-first into the cushiony depths of her bed, and permitted Phyllis to tuck her in, and pat the pillows into place; but as the older girl leaned over and lightly kissed her, a dry sob shook her, and she caught the other's cool, soft hand in her own two feverish ones, and said in adoration:

"You're an angel to me. I know my mother's mighty close to God now, and sent me to you just so's I'd be happy once."

Phyllis turned away abruptly, and explained to her mother; she couldn't stand the hurt puppy-look in the child's eyes.

"Isn't she adorable?" she whispered to her mother. "Just like a Burne Jones, with her vivid red hair against the background of blue satin. She's the most gorgeous-

ly alive thing I've seen for ages! Quite the most attractive! I must make a sketch of her." Phyllis was a very good amateur artist.

"She is pretty," said her mother.

"Pretty! She's positively beautiful! Poor little waif!" Crossing to her side, she laid a caressing hand on Janie's hair.

"How very hot your head is! I hope you aren't going to be ill!"

She gathered up her evening coat, which she had thrown across a chair earlier in the evening, and started to leave the room, but her father laid a detaining hand on her arm, and said softly, so that his remark reached her ears alone:

"Leave the cloak there, Phyllis."

"Why, daddy, I was just going to put it away."

"I want you to leave it where it is," he replied. "Also the diamond pin; don't remove it."

"Oh, father," she said; "I understand you; that's what the detective wants you to do. Tempt this child! It's cruel of you. I won't be a party to it!"

He gently but firmly disengaged her hands from about the garment and replaced it on the chair.

"Good-night, my dear," he said.

With a petulant toss of her head, Phyllis left the room, after saying good-night to her mother and guest.

"Stephen! Stephen, what has come over you!" exclaimed his wife in an undertone.

For answer, he surprised her by kissing her, and paused for her to precede him.

"Hello!" he exclaimed, as they almost bumped into Adam, stepping into the corridor which separated the various rooms from each other. "I thought you had gone to bed," he added, eyeing him curiously.

"Decided I wanted a smoke, and am going outside for a cigar," Adam replied. He wore an overcoat and hat, and seemed anxious to pass them. His mother gave a bird-like peck for a kiss, and disappeared into her room, but Stephen stood watching him as he re-entered the living-room and, pausing for an instant, crossed to the window on the fire-escape and raised it a trifle.

"The girl shouldn't sleep without fresh air," he explained. "Good-night, dad, see you in the morning."

Stephen fingered a cigar in his vest-pocket, and laughed softly as he switched out the lights, then he stepped to Janie's bedside, and stood silently watching her. Almost lulled to sleep by the scent of the perfumed coverlets which enveloped her, she drew back in dismay as she met the eyes of the man she had grown to dread with an utterable loathing.

In the quiet, cool way in which he did everything, he pulled a chair about, and sat facing her.

"In the morning," he said, "you shall be paid the reward, and then I want you to go away and never come here again."

"Reward?" said Janie, her dry lips just framing the words. His cold eyes held her own with the intensity of his glance.

"A thousand dollars for finding the jewels. The obvious reason for your returning them," he said, his upper lip curling in a sneer. Janie started to protest at his accusation. "It doesn't matter one way or another," he replied. "The jewels have been returned; you shall be paid. The thing is, I want you to go away, and stay away. Do you understand?"

"Yes, sir."

He rose abruptly. "Well, it's late," he said. "Good-night."

CHAPTER V

JANIE'S EXPERIENCE WITH A ROBBER

A CLOCK in the distance chimed the half-hour. Slowly, steathily, with infinite caution, a black mass against the dark stone of the building, could be seen a figure climbing down the fire-escape. Not a sound came from his movements. Suddenly an icicle was dislodged and fell with a crackling sound to the ground. The man started. A voice from the court below wafted upwards. Quick as a flash, with the movements of a graceful cat, the climber dodged into the first window, and stood for a moment hidden in the dark draperies, panting at his narrow escape. A shot was fired from below, and he moved closer to the center of the room. Janie wakened suddenly to find herself in total darkness, in a strange room. Everything was intensely quiet, even her own breathing, and the beating of her heart sounded loud in the absolute silence about her.

After a moment her eyes became accustomed to the darkness, and she realized there was a very faint glow coming from a night-lamp standing on a taborette near her bed. Reaching over, she experimented and, pulling a chain, strengthened its gleam. A smothered exclamation came from somewhere in the room, and the next instant a blinding flash of light shone full in her eyes.

"Oh," she cried out in terror; but before she had time to call again a hand closed over her mouth, and a throaty voice bade her "shut up!" She tried, futilely, to pull the hand from off her mouth and, in struggling to maintain his hold on her, the other dropped his flash, and the night lamp shone upon his face.

The girl's intense surprise caused her to cease her struggle. He loosened her hold, and she sank back upon the sofa, with mingled feelings of horror, fear and incredulity.

"Mr. Adam!" she whispered to herself. "Mr. Adam!"

For a moment they stared at each other; Janie torn between a desire to cry aloud, and a fear which kept her silent—a fear not for herself, though she saw the cold glitter of the automatic he carried; but for him, the man who had been kind to her but a few hours before.

A low, exultant cry from the man caused her to follow his glance. Kent had flung Phyllis's coat across a chair, and caught in the meshes of the lace was a diamond bar pin.

Before his hand touched the brooch, Janie was aware of his intention, and she cried out in protest. This time he silenced her by turning the automatic on her.

"If you peep, I'll shoot!" he snarled.

With quick, deft fingers he tore the pin from the lace and thrust it in his pocket.

"Don't do that!" she sobbed in a whisper. "Why do you take her pin? She'll think I done it! Put it back, Mr. Adam! Please put it back!"

He laughed softly, then suddenly became tense. Outside the door, down the corridor could be heard some one running, then voices gradually growing closer. What they were saying became distinguishable.

"He dodged in here!" "Through that window!" "Apartment forty-four!"

Alert, tense, head thrown back, nostrils quivering like a fine-bred animal, the man stood waiting, then quickly he turned to the open window which led to the fire-escape. Like a flash he sprinted across and glanced down—smothering an oath as he saw the men in the court below—the moonlight plainly illuminating the dark figures on the snow-covered ground. He ran across to the window,

which opened onto the street, and flung open the dark curtain which hid it from view. A balustrade ran from one window to the other.

The girl stood watching him breathless, curiously dumb. A sharp knock on the hall door caused her to dart to the center of the room.

"Don't open it!" said the man in sharp staccato tones. He stepped behind the curtains, drawing them about him; but he kept his revolver leveled upon her. She made another move toward the door; his "if you do, I'll fire!" caused her to hesitate.

"Open this door!" came from the house detective, after a persistent knocking had taken place. By the click of the window opening, and a gust of air blowing in her face, Janie knew the man had stepped out the window. Half sobbing with sheer terror, she managed to unlock the door.

McCall stepped in, followed by O'Rafferty and several guests of the hotel. There was more than suspicion in the look he gave the trembling girl standing in her night clothes—there was accusation.

Before he could question her beyond "Where is he?" Mr. Kent, in a lounging robe, followed by his wife and daughter, stormed into the room to demand what was causing the disturbance.

"My men, stationed in the court below, saw a man climb in here through the fire-escape," explained O'Rafferty; "he telephoned me, and as I'd hung around the corridor, as you asked I should, I was Johnny on the spot, but couldn't get in; no one would open the door—so it looks like our bird has flew the coop again!"

"Didn't you hear them knocking?" Stephen said, turning to Janie.

She nodded assent.

"Why didn't you open the door then?" cried Mrs. Kent. But the girl was unable to speak.

O'Rafferty strode towards her and, with no gentle hand, took hold of her shoulder. "Did you see a man come in through that fire-escape?" he asked.

"No," she answered bravely, determined to shield her friend.

"You haven't seen anybody in here at all?"

For a second she hesitated, then she lied bravely: "No!"

The startled exclamation Phyllis gave drew their attention, for the time being, away from Janie.

"My brooch!" she cried. "It's gone!" She held up the opera coat, showing the torn fragments of lace from which the pin had been taken.

"Well!" said Stephen Kent dryly; "did I do wrong in having McCall keep an eye on the girl? Search her!"

Janie gave a cry of indignation, and drew back wide-eyed. "I ain't a thief!" she cried. "I didn't take it."

"She hasn't got the pin," said O'Rafferty quietly. "The man she's shielding has it. He's too wise to leave it on her. Come across, kid—who is he and where did he go?"

She did not see Adam quietly enter the room, pulling on his coat as he did so. His cool inquiry as to what was the row caused her to turn. For a moment she swayed, her hands fluttered toward him, she half sobbed:

"You—you came back! It was a joke—tell 'em—I didn't do it—I——?"

He took her hands, and his cool touch brought her reeling senses to a balance.

"What is it?"

"Oh, my Gawd!" she suddenly laughed. "You ain't him! He's a different man! I—he looked like you. I thought—I let him get away! Oh, lock me up!

Her laughter died in a sob, and the floor which had been so unsteady suddenly rose up, seemed to hit her, and then as it sank back into place she sank with it.

It was some time later, after the excitement had died down, that the night clerk perceived a great drooping, disheveled figure asleep on the bell-boy's bench. He crossed to him and, shaking him roughly, ordered him to be gone.

Lem rose unsteadily and, in a low, angry voice, demanded to be shown to the Kent apartment.

"Easy now, easy," said the clerk; "you can see them in the morning."

"To-night!" muttered Ladd, suddenly assuming a threatening attitude. "I got my reasons, and I'm goin' up." He broke away from the night clerk, entered the elevator, and went up.

Ladd wandered down the hallway, until he came to the door for which he was searching. He did not take the trouble to knock or ring the bell, but flung it wide open, and stood framed in the doorway.

"Say," he cried lustily; "what the devil have you done with my girl?"

Adam, who was bending over the half-conscious form of Janie, whom he had placed on the divan when she fainted, turned quickly, and strove to hide her from Ladd's view.

As she heard the man's exclamation, she gave a choking cry, tried to rise, but Adam's restraining arm held her down. "It's dad!" she whispered. "He'll just about kill me!"

Even O'Rafferty was touched with compassion. She looked so pitifully small, so fragile to combat with the great hulking brute who demanded her return, that it is doubtful if any one would have admitted any knowledge of her if she had not cried out and called Ladd's attention to her presence among the heap of black and gold cushions.

"There she is!" he cried exultantly. "What'd I tell you! Get a move on, my lady, and come on home with me! I'll learn you to go traipsin' off at night this way! What'd you come here for any way?" he added suspiciously.

"What'd you come here for anyway?" she repeated after him in a pert little way—infinitely pathetic in its imitation of her usual manner.

He made a lurch toward her, but Stephen Kent stepped in between. Janie's cry of

"Don't let him take me! He ain't my real father!" was lost in the sharp intake of breath from Stephen Kent as they looked deep into each other's eyes. Stephen's, cold as steel, gray-green, met those of the drunken man fearlessly, unfalteringly. While the shifty, yellow eyes of the other narrowed, wavered and fell.

"Well, I'll be doggone!" he muttered. "I'll be dog——"

"That will do!" said Stephen's rasping voice. "We've had about enough from you! Get out!"

"It's a deuce of a way to treat an honest man, jest 'cause he wants his daughter," Ladd sniveled.

Finding that tears were of no avail, for O'Rafferty gave him a vicious thrust toward the door, he began to laugh—a menacing laugh—and when Kent closed the door in his face, he sang in a drunken basso: "Should auld acquaintance be forgot in the days of Auld Lang Syne."

CHAPTER VI

MORE VISITORS

MRS. CULLEN pounded on the door, which rattled and creaked under the impact of her fist, and repeated her call of "Janie! Janie!" but no reply came from within. For the fifth time during the day the large, rawboned Irish woman, who lived in the flat on the floor

above, and called herself Janie's neighbor, had descended the stairs, and pounded upon the door.

"For the love of Mike!" she muttered under her breath. "Two days gone—the both of 'em! I hope they ain't been murdered or kidnapped. If the child don't show up by night, I'm goin' to tell the cops, and have 'em go lookin' for her; I never did trust that Lem Ladd nohow, and he's jest as like as not to be after beatin' her up, and then goin' off on a drunken spell himself." She turned away in disappointment, and started laboriously to climb the stairs to her own dwelling-place.

On the upper landing she met another inmate of the tenement and, full of her worries, she explained the cause of them.

"Two days ago the child borrowed my Jimmy's overalls," she said, "and dressed up as a boy. She went somewhere. 'Twasn't none of my business where, so I didn't ask her. Dear knows, I wish I had; she was that excited. Then, jest after she left, that stepdad of her'n came thunderin' up here, huntin' for her, and there was murder in his eyes, the spalpeen! He made me fair quiver in my shoes! He said he'd find her! Well, he ain't come back, and neither has she, and the door is locked tighter'n a drum, and I'm scairt!" Her voice trembled, though she strove to hide her emotion.

The appearance of a well-dressed stranger in the hallway below them, momentarily displaced all thoughts of Janie and her disappearance. He was of a type most uncommon in the neighborhood, and never seen in the building itself, with his well-fitting overcoat with the fur collar, immaculate gray gloves, and polished shoes. He was, however, obviously at home. He hesitated for a moment before the locked door which led into Janie's rooms; then, throwing open his overcoat, reached in his trousers pocket and pulled out a key. This he fitted into the door. As he leaned forward to turn the key in the lock, his hat pushed backward, and the breathless watchers above saw a youngish man, with dark, close-cropped hair, touched with gray at the temples, and a small, well-trimmed mustache.

Before either woman could speak, he had stepped inside the room—closing the door behind him.

"Well!" gasped Mrs. Cullen, her usually red face quite pale with astonishment.

"He ain't no right in there!" exclaimed the other. "Mebbe he's a thief!"

"In them clothes!" But Mrs. Cullen began immediately to descend the stairs, her neighbor following at her heels, panting like a steam engine. At the door they hesitated.

"Knock," said Mr. O'Flannigan. But the other woman unceremoniously flung it open and stepped inside. The room was in a state of disorder, as though everything had been flung right and left in a search for some missing article. Bed-clothes, papers and boxes were scattered about on chairs, dishes thrown in the center of the room, garments flung loosely on the chair and bed, curtains torn from the window, pictures dragged from the wall. In the midst of all the disorder, evidently caused by himself, stood the stranger, on a chair, searching for something on the top shelf of the cupboard. He turned quickly as they entered, snarled something under his breath, and sprang to the floor. For a moment he stared at them, resentment gradually being replaced by a smile.

"Well?" he said.

"Well, yourself," said Mrs. Cullen. "Will you be after explainin' what you're doin' here in another man's house?"

"Certainly, if you think it is necessary." He laughed lightly, and brushed the dust off his trousers with a slim, well-kept hand from which he had removed the glove. "I came on an errand for my friend, Mr. Ladd."

"Where is Lem Ladd?" asked Mrs. Cullen.

The man looked infinitely bored.

"I'm sorry you've asked me that question," he said. "I regret that I must tell you so unpleasant a thing. Mr. Ladd is on Blackwell's Island."

"Glory be!" gasped Mrs. Cullen. "Arrested! What for?"

"Disorderly conduct. Now, if you've no objections, I'll continue with my errand." The stranger dismissed the subject with a wave of his hand toward the door.

"And I do object," said Mrs. Cullen stolidly. "I don't know who you be, nor what you're after, but it ain't the likes of you is a friend to a roustabout like him! Not that I'm his friend either, St. Patrick forbid, but I'm that fond of Janie, his stepdaughter, I'll even stomick him for her sake; and if you've come nosin' around here for no good, it's me you've got to make your peace with!"

"My dear woman——" protested the man.

"Don't my dear woman me! I dunno if it's you as made a scrap-heap of a place Janie always keeps spick and tidy—if ye did, bad cess to you! But as long as you're in this flat, here I'm goin' to stay!"

"Thank you. I appreciate your society." He laughed easily, and mounted the chair again. Mrs. Cullen stood watching him, arms a-kimbo, a picture of outraged womanhood. Mrs. O'Flannigan was too flabbergasted at her neighbor's daring to speak.

After what appeared to be a futile search, the man's manner indicating his annoyance, he jumped from the chair again, pulled on his hat, gloves and overcoat, seemingly without any haste, although every move was quick and agile, and he extended the key to Mrs. Cullen.

"Perhaps you would feel safer with this in your possession," he said, the ghost of a sneer in his voice; "as you do not trust me in your friend's home, your mind may be at ease to know I have no way to gain access to it."

Mrs. Cullen took the key without a word. With a courteous bow and "good-night," the man departed.

"Well!" gasped both women.

Mrs. Cullen locked the door securely, as they stepped outside, and dropped the key in her apron pocket.

In the days that followed, Janie had an opportunity to become very well acquainted, indeed, with the Kent family, for the strange falling sensation she had experienced, and the alternate waves of heat and cold, proved to be the forerunner of pneumonia fever; and she was compelled to remain in their household.

Too sick at first to feel any sense of intrusion, by the time she was convalescing they had made her so much one of themselves she was no longer a stranger.

Now, propped up in the bed, with her vivid red hair against a background of turquoise blue satin, Janie lay for hours, while Phyllis sketched, erased, painted, blotted out, and repainted.

"For one so vivid, you are terribly elusive," Phyllis said, after a futile attempt to place Janie's likeness on the canvas. "I think I have just caught your expression and, looking again, another has taken its place."

Janie gave a low, tinkling laugh. Unconsciously, she was copying Phyllis in all her ways, choosing each word carefully before she uttered it, modulating the tones of her already musical voice, softening her laugh, which had held a bit of the East Side in it.

"Whatever are you thinking of, child?" exclaimed the artist, dropping her brush, and looking intently at her.

"Mona Lisa's smile is not more inscrutable than yours. What is in that little red head of yours?"

Janie flushed, and twisted the covering in embarrassment.

"I was wondering," she said softly, as though the words were being dragged from her, "why your father hates me so."

"Nonsense! Why should he hate you?"

"He does! I can feel it. And he don't want me here. I know."

Just then Adam entered the room, and his sister left them alone.

"Well, what are you going to buy first of all with the thousand dollars?" Adam said, as he watched her, propped up in bed, nibbling at a bit of chicken-breast, with a pretense at eating it.

"And I'm to get a thousand dollars," whispered Janie, in an awe-stricken voice. Her eyes became big as saucers, and she almost dropped the tray with its dainty linen and china. "Gee! I don't want it! Now, I sleep nights, and if I was a millionaire I'd lie awake to keep from havin' it stolen."

"You could do a great deal with a thousand dollars, if you used it judiciously," said Adam.

"Uhu! I could!" She cupped her pointed chin in the hollow of a very thin, white hand, and stared into space. Her great gray-green eyes slowly filled with tears, giving them a luminous beauty; she blinked sturdily, but one salt drop rolled down her cheek and dropped into her tea-cup.

"Why, Janie!" exclaimed Adam.

"Gee!" she giggled; "I've salted my tea, when I oughta sugared it."

"What is it?" he said, a note of tenderness creeping into his voice. He removed the tray from the bed, and seated himself at the foot of it, looking questioningly at her. It required an effort for Janie to speak, facing him so closely, and when she did, she said more than she intended.

"Ah, shucks," she said; "what's the use now? If I'd had that money a year ago, my mother would be alive today. She died 'cause we couldn't afford the things she needed! Died because of a few measly little dollars! You can't buy wine, and jellies, and chicken, and fresh air on six dollars a week, and that's what my job paid! And now, when it don't mean anything to me, I got a lot of dough, and she's gone!"

"But it must mean something to you," he said, laying his hand in hers.

"There's something inside of me that just aches to be different, to live different, and keeps saying: 'Stick to it! Stick to it! You'll be human yet, if you keep it up!'" Her voice quivered, even as she laughed. "The money might make a real girl of me."

"Why, you poor little tyke!" exclaimed the man, eyeing her in astonishment.

"Don't you be sorry for me!" she cried fiercely. "'Cause you'll make me cry, and I can't stand cry-babies! Go on, laugh at me! Please—I—I don't want to make a fool of myself."

Adam jumped to his feet. Abruptly turning his back upon her, and whistling a popular air, he strode to the window, where he stood with his hands thrust deep in his trousers pockets, apparently staring at the moving panorama in the street below, but in reality getting Janie's view-point of life.

Janie had crept so close to his heart she could not be displaced. The warmth of her was so sweet he scarcely dared breathe to himself that he loved her.

Then, at last, he turned from the window, and in his eyes shone the light of a new-found happiness; a determination to take that which was within his grasp. This girl, with her wealth of magnetism, her undeveloped possibilities, was his to make or break; he would make her what she desired to be and, doing so, find his own happiness.

He found her staring at him, with a quizzical expression totally different from the luminous, soulful look that had filled her eyes before. The lid of one eye had a quaint little way of drooping the barest trifle when she studied very hard about anything, and it gave to her face a piquant look that the man now noticed for the first time. It fascinated him.

"We'l?" he said, in answer to her silent question.

"Ain't it strange?" she said, in an awed sort of way. "The way that other man looked like you! Somehow, I just can't figure it out. I can shut my eyes and see him; then I see you; and I feel all funny!" She waved her hands before her eyes in a gesture to convey her bewilderment.

Adam laughed uneasily. "I wouldn't think about it, if I were you," he said. "I've an idea the man didn't look nearly so much like me as you think he did. You see, you were ill, and perhaps you fell asleep, thinking of me; so, when you were suddenly wakened, my image was firmly impressed on your mind. In your bewilderment you mistook for me a man who, perhaps, resembled me, to a certain degree, and the result was very natural." He spoke easily enough, but Janie detected a certain constraint in his manner, and she forbore to mention the subject further.

CHAPTER VII

JANIE MAKES AN EXIT

THE next day, tucked in the Kent's big limousine, with a beaver rug wrapped about her, a wonderful seal-skin scarf enveloping her small frame, and a fur bonnet pulled down over her red curls, Janie made her first tour of the Fifth Avenue shops. She was a little too weak and shaky to stand the stress of the shopping, so Phyllis bade the chauffeur drive past slowly so that she could look in the windows, and see the fashions on display It did not occur to Phyllis that in taking the little waif about in her machine, appareled in her own elaborate wardrobe, she was sowing the seeds of future discontent. She was getting as keen an enjoyment out of the experiment as Janie, and the younger girl seemed to fit so well into the picture that she did not stop to weigh the consequence.

Janie sat breathless, awed, unable to speak. When they drew up to the curb before a very small shop, she was a little surprised, but allowed the chauffeur to assist her to alight and, clinging to Phyllis' arm, she entered the portals of a place that spelled Heaven! She scarcely knew what Phyllis purchased, she was so busy studying the saleslades, and mentally tabulating the things she intended to copy from them. The soft shaded lights, the thick carpets, the delicate perfume threw a glamour over the place that caused their purchases to be thrown in the background.

When once more she was curled up in the cushiony seat of the car, she was almost startled when Phyllis remarked:

"You'll look lovely in a little serge suit."

A cup of tea, at a little shop, freshened her, and she sighed when she found they were driving homeward.

"I've a dinner engagement," Phyllis explained, "or we'd ride longer, though I dare say it's better for you to go home. We mustn't do too much in one day."

Janie discovered she was to be left to her own resources the whole evening, for the entire Kent family were going to the dinner. Her own meal was served to her in the drawing-room, and she sat before the fireplace, nibbling at the food, and making pictures in the fire, when they made their departure. Phyllis kissed her as she passed through the room, a cloud of billowy rose-colored tulle and ermine, fragrant with crushed flowers and perfume, and Adam paused to lay his hand, with a caressing gesture, on her head. Half unconsciously, she reached up and patted his hand and, as their fingers touched, she raised her eyes, and his eyes met hers. All the pent-up affection of her love-starved soul shone in her eyes. It affected the man tremendously, and his voice was husky as he said:

"Don't be lonesome, Janie, nor sit up too long."

After they had gone, she sat hugging her knees, staring into the firelight, the meal forgotten in her food for thought.

"Oh, God, make Adam love me!" she said half aloud; then almost shrieked with terror as she turned to find Stephen Kent beside her.

He had returned quietly, and for several seconds had stood watching her. There was something almost sardonic in his smile—a smile which did not extend to his eyes, but seemed to draw his thin, tight lips away from his teeth as though against his will. The girl, after her first startled cry, met his gaze squarely. For a moment it seemed as if there were a clash of wills. Her own lips set firmly, she did not smile, but her gaze wavered and fell before the cold steel glitter in the man's eyes.

"You—you scared me," she stammered. "I thought you had gone. I didn't hear you come back!"

"I'm sorry," he said politely, with an obvious effort to talk naturally. "I had no desire to startle you."

"I didn't know—I—I thought you'd gone with them," she repeated. A fear was creeping over her, causing her to grow cold and numb.

"You've got your money, your clothes, and your health; there's no need for you to remain longer," he said, each word cold, crisp, metallic.

"No," she said. "No."

"Then go," he ordered. She looked at him blankly.

"I—I am going," she stammered.

"To-night," he ordered.

"To-night!" she repeated, unable to comprehend what he said.

"To-night. I said it. They are gone out; it's your chance to get away without a fuss or to-do. I came back to tell you."

"You—you want me to leave without saying good-by? You want me to go now? I—I—where'll I go?" She was too bewildered to think.

"Where you came from, I suppose!" he snarled. "I don't care where. You're not without money. I've attended to that matter, and here's a thousand more"; he flung ten crisp yellow bills on the divan by her. "Don't say you aren't strong enough, nor you can't go without good-bys, because you *are* going—and *to-night!*"

"Oh; but Mr. Adam and——"

The man fairly blazed at her as he grasped her arm in a clutch that brought a cry from her lips.

"That's it! If you stay, the fool will fall in love with you and, by God!"—as though he had said more than he intended, he abruptly loosened his hold, and more quietly continued—"you'll cause trouble if you remain, and if you do not go, unknown to them, they will prevail on you to remain longer, and you must go; you *must!*"

"I'll go," Janie said wearily.

There was no use pitting her feeble strength against this man's, who loathed her; for what reason, she could not guess; but, after all, the leaving time was bound to come. The little prayer she had offered for Adam's love she knew could never be granted; it was impossible. What mattered if she left all this to-day or to-morrow? The hurt could be no greater now than then. Scarcely thinking what she did, she gathered up the bills he had flung at her and crushed them in a ball in her two hands. She staggered past him into the white and gold room where she had been so happy and where so new a vista had been opened to her. The blur of tears blinded her; she strove not to cry; she would not show her emotion before the man who followed her, and stood in the doorway watching her through half-closed eyes, as she lifted from its hanger the jacket to the little suit she had bought only that day.

"There's a taxi waiting for you downstairs," he said grimly. "Tell him where you want to go."

She looked at him, wide-eyed, helpless.

"I don't know where to go. Not to dad's; he'll kill me! I'm afraid."

He shrugged his shoulders; then, mentioning a cheap hotel close by, bade her go there for the night, referring to him as reference.

"And then," he said, "you are to drop out of our lives just as though you *never had been.* You simply don't exist!" and he departed.

As she entered the elevator to descend, the elevator opposite her flew upwards, and, with a gasp of astonishment, which brought her to a keen realization of her position, she saw in the ascending car the figure of a man she recognized as her stepfather, Lem Ladd.

"Dad!" she whispered, horror-stricken. "He's goin' to see him! That's why *I* had to go!"

Janie's surmise was correct. Lem Ladd was going to the Kent apartment. Almost before the elevator stopped, and he stepped out, Stephen Kent threw open the door and admitted him.

Ladd was sober, but not a pleasant object to look at, and Stephen Kent's face was gray. A thin white line seemed drawn about his lips, and he seemed to breathe with difficulty.

He motioned to his visitor to be seated, then poured a glass of whisky from a decanter and drank it at a swallow. Lem eyed him greedily, waited for him to offer him one likewise and, when none was forthcoming, announced that he was thirsty.

Silently, Kent poured out the liquor and handed it to him. After drinking it, Ladd rose and helped himself to another glass, then, facing his visitor, who had sunken into the chair as though utterly exhausted, he said:

"Well—let's get to business:

"Wait," gasped Kent, clutching at his side spasmodically. "My heart—I—the bathroom—cabinet—aromatic ammonia—I——"

Ladd, thoroughly frightened, obeyed him and, after administering the dose, he waited for the stricken man to recover himself.

"It'll get me some day," Kent announced, as the color crept back in his face. "My wife doesn't know; but any excitement—never mind—as you said, let's get down to business."

The men drew their chairs closer together, and spoke for some fifteen minutes in low, tense whispers, occasionally punctuated by an oath from Ladd or a mut-

tered exclamation of protest from Kent. Then the visitor rose to make his departure. When he reached the elevator, he was richer by some hundreds than when he had entered the apartment.

CHAPTER VIII

THE MAN WITH THE CIGAR

JANIE shivered as the cold air struck her face. She was not conscious of having passed through the hotel lobby, or of the lacky who had thrown open the doors for her to depart, nor had she seen the curious glances which followed her. She entered the waiting machine, mumbled her destination, and when the car stopped at the curb a few blocks away she followed the driver into the hotel, and watched him quietly as he turned her bag over to the porter who admitted them.

"Gentleman paid me, miss," he said, touching his hat, as she fumbled with her purse.

At the desk she learned Stephen Kent had already secured her a room by telephone, saving her that annoyance.

Once inside the room, and the door closed on the boy who had ushered her in, she flung herself onto the bed, without removing her outer garments, and pressed her hands against her mouth to keep from shrieking aloud. Something cut her lips, and she realized it was the ball of crumpled yellow bills she still had crushed in her fist. With a gesture of loathing she flung them from her, laughing.

"Ugh! Ugh!" Then she sobbed, heart-brokenly, until, from sheer exhaustion, she fell asleep.

The morning sun, playing full upon her face, brought her to a realization of her surroundings, and she was astonished to find that, regardless of her pain, she had slept very soundly.

Though it seemed as if the weight of the world's sorrows were upon her young shoulders, her irrepressible youth came to the surface. Ever it, and the Celtic strain in her, had helped her to overcome obstacles and endure vicissitudes which would have downed older and more serious persons. Her sense of humor was her salvation.

After an intent look at her reflected face next day, to see that there were no traces of last night's tears, she took up the business of dressing. She felt a keen enjoyment in her new, stylish clothing. Her fingers became all thumbs in her desire for speed to get dressed and go to the store—the store which heretofore she had disliked, because it spelled routine and drudgery to her. Now she wished to go there, to swoop down upon her fellow workers, and impress them with the importance of her changed appearance and circumstances. Even her economical spirit bowed before her great adventure, and she hired a taxi for the occasion. She knew this was extravagant, but the hundred-dollar bills she possessed gave her a great sense of security.

She made a grand entry, as the cab drove up to the curb, and alighted with a new-found dignity, her head held high, in an exaggerated pose, her skirts lifted to show her well-shod feet and silk hose. No queen was ever prouder than she was, as she met the expression of astonishment and admiration from her former associates.

"Where'd you get the glad rags?" cried the girl at the ribbon counter nearest the door, as Janie, after calling, "Hello, girls!" and waiting for the importance of the taxi-cab to sink in, turned nonchalantly to the driver, and bade him to wait.

"Say! where have you been keeping yourself?" said the floorwalker.

Janie brushed past him and strolled to her own counter—the neckwear department. Another girl had taken her place—a girl she knew. She stopped to speak to each gaping employee as she passed, and her soul drank deep in the heady wine of flattery, as more than one gasped: "Fifth Avenue! Gee!"

"What's the idea?" said Mamie Hogan; "I didn't think it of you, Janie!"

"Think what?" cried Janie, turning on her furiously. "Can that quick; it don't go." For the moment her grandiloquent manner fell from her, and she dropped in the jargon of the former life.

"Well, I don't get your pace, nor your leaving us," said the other, unflinchingly. She was a plain, wholesome girl, who had taken a mild interest in Janie from the time she had entered the store as cash-girl and risen to a position behind the neckwear department.

"Well," said Janie mysteriously, "I've been left a legacy."

"What? What's a legacy?"

"Something that you get handed to you by some one croaking," she said, without the quiver of an eyelash.

"Money?" asked Mamie, awed.

"Yep. Two thousand dollars."

The older girl grew white. She steadied herself by resting her hands on the counter.

"Ain't you the lucky one!" she muttered. "Where'd it come from?"

For a moment Janie hesitated. She had not reckoned on this question, but she lied glibly enough:

"From my own father's estate."

The junior partner, strolling through the store, noticed the commotion, the air of subdued excitement, and inquired the cause. The floorwalker pointed to Janie in her gala attire (she had contrived to buy the white-topped shoes and velvet Tam before coming to the store), and he laughed.

"An old girl has come back dressed up in borrowed finery," he said.

The junior partner's eyes narrowed, as he took in the details of Janie's figure, her piquant, flushed face, her gorgeous hair, and slim straight lines, the hint of aristocracy about her bearing.

"She worked here?" he said slowly. "Where?"

"Neckwear," replied the floorwalker.

"She's a beauty," said the junior partner. Then he sent for her. Before she fully comprehended her good fortune, Janie had had an interview with the employer, who had never before been conscious of her existence. That interview had led to her being hired; this time, as a hat model, at twenty dollars a week. Her work was to begin the following day.

"My!" she murmured, as she settled back into the taxi-cab. "Clothes ain't everything, but they're the nearest thing to bein' all *that is!*"

In a dark, ill-smelling room, behind a bar, with the curtains drawn, and the one gas jet throwing flickering ominous shadows on the wall, two men sat in close conversation over a long deal table. One, the younger, had his hat pulled down over his forehead, and was chewing viciously upon a long, black cigar; the other, a huge, unshaven man of middle age, slumped low in his chair, occasionally taking a long drink from a schooner of beer which stood before him. As he turned to a slovenly

waiter, intending to order more beer, the man with the cigar leaned quickly forward and laid a well-kept, slender hand on his arm.

"Cut it out," he said quietly. "You've had enough tonight, and you need all your wits about you."

Ladd obeyed, and waved the waiter aside.

"I don't get the mustache," he said, when they were alone again. Save for themselves, and the noiseless waiter, the room was empty. "What's the dope?"

The other man laughed.

"Haven't you tumbled yet?" he said. He pushed his hat back from his forehead, exposing his close-cropped, dark hair, broad forehead, and keen, dark eyes. Lightly he touched the mustache in question and the graying hair at the temples.

"By Jove! I do!" Ladd suddenly exclaimed, springing to his feet. "I had a turn that night at the hotel when you—say, it wasn't you at all!"

The other merely smiled, and flicked the ashes from his cigar. "No?" he said.

Ladd squinted one eye, then the other, striving hard to concentrate his bewildered wits.

"That—that young Kent chap and you. Well, I'll be damned!"

"Not so loud," cautioned the other.

"But still, I don't get your dope," argued the big man. "It's easier to spot you with your hair grayed, and the hair on your lip, and——"

"Think so?"

"And what does it get you?"

"Do I look much like this Kent?" the young man asked, rising.

"Damned if you don't; now I remember. Took him for you in the dark, 'spite the whiskers, which I didn't know you wore. How'd it come? You look like the old man, too; blamed if you don't."

A smoldering flame sprang into the younger man's dark eyes. "Do I?" he sneered. "Well, that's not unlikely, considering he's my father!"

"What! Say, what are you givin' me?"

But the other had lapsed back in his cool air of self-possession.

"Forget it," he said. "There's bigger things than old man Kent to discuss. Through your fool carelessness, the biggest haul in years came to nothing; don't forget that. If I didn't know you were too big a coward to try to play the game alone, I'd think you'd double-crossed me; but I believe your story. That girl of yours learned in some way you had the sparklers; maybe you told her; I've only your word you didn't. Anyway, she double-crossed us, and took them back. Got a nice little reward for herself, I'll warrant."

"Blast her hide!" muttered Ladd; "I'll make her eat dirt! Wait till I get my hands on her; I'll break every——"

"Never mind," the man with the cigar broke in curtly. "The thing is, the jewels are back with the owners, and my hands are itching to get hold of them again."

"Not again," said Ladd; "it can't be done."

"You poor fish! You say you can get into the apartment any time you like——"

"But I wouldn't lift them stones!" whispered Ladd. "No; I couldn't lift them stones! Not for nothin', I couldn't!"

"I'm not asking you to. You're too big a boob. All I want is the key, and the entrée through the door, not the window. Get me?"

"You—you wouldn't do it?" gasped Ladd, in astonishment. The other laughed, and straightened his slim figure; standing directly under the light, he faced his companion. Again he touched his hair and mustache.

"Now, you understand, don't you?" he said. "It's up to you to do something with the chap who looks like me. If you've a thought in that noodle of yours, use it."

When Janie left the store, she was definitely decided upon the course she intended to pursue. She first determined to pay her hotel bill, then find a new and better place to live, one befitting her importance in commercial life and the bank-roll she possessed. Also, she wished to deposit the yellow bills in a savings bank for safe keeping. From the first she had realized the value of the penny savings bank, and already had something like five dollars to her credit.

The finding of the new home took several days, and, in the joy of purchasing the few simple furnishings for the tiny two-room apartment, the ache in her heart was some way alleviated. Though, in a way, she had stepped entirely out of Adam Kent's life, she was preparing herself for the time when they should meet again, and take up the threads of the love which had been so sweet.

She enrolled as a student in a night high school, and went to work in her new position at the store.

It was after she had become really settled in her new life that she remembered there were many things which had belonged to her mother at Lem Ladd's, and that they were of too much value to her to remain there. So, choosing a time when she felt reasonably sure that her stepfather would be away, she paid a visit to her old home.

She shuddered perceptibly as she opened the door, and saw the disorderly state of the little apartment, always poor, but kept tidy and clean by dint of her hard-working fingers. Dust everywhere, unwashed dishes in the sink, the remains of a meal on the table, the beds unmade, the fires out, while the odor of stale beer and old tobacco pipes almost choked her.

After putting everything she desired into the bag and, snapping the lid shut, she ran to a window which opened onto the air-shaft and, throwing it open, called lustily, as loud as her strong, young lungs would permit:

"Mrs. Cullen! Hey, Mrs. Cullen!"

That energetic lady, busy over a wash-tub, paused abruptly, as she heard her name called by a familiar voice, which she never dared hope to hear again. Wiping her red arms on her apron, she ran to the window and, flinging it open, cried down the shaft:

"Hey, yourself! It ain't Janie, is it?"

"It is that!" was the reply.

"Saints preserve us!" muttered the Irish woman and, as fast as bed-room slippers and two hundred pounds of solid flesh would permit, she ran to meet the girl. She gathered her in her great, motherly arms, giving her a bear hug, and shedding copious tears on Janie's beloved finery.

The girl explained as much of the situation as she thought advisable, carefully keeping hidden any knowledge of the jewels, or their return. She had been left a legacy, she said; just as she told the girls in the store. She was living further uptown, and had a firm determination to make something of herself.

"I've gotta get away from Lem Ladd, Mrs. Cullen," she said emphatically. "I never could be anything here. You know that. Somehow, I feel that mother's got so close to God, she asked Him to gimme this chance to make good, and He did it to please her, 'cause she's so good! I've got to show her I'm grateful."

Janie declined to explain why she borrowed the over-

alls, laughingly saying she wore them to a masquerade party, but when she produced a fur scarf and muff for her friend, there was no occasion to answer more questions. Mrs. Cullen placed the pelt around the neck of her calico wrapper, and strutted like a turkey-gobbler. Her joy was unbounded, when Janie opened her bag and, from the depths of the satin lining, drew out several small parcels, which proved to be toys for Jimmy, Mrs. Cullen's crippled boy.

"Let's stuff the pockets of his overalls," said Janie, "and play Christmas!" Laughing merrily, she held up the borrowed overalls, while Mrs. Cullen filled the pockets with candy, oranges, a toy pistol, and several other articles dear to the heart of a small boy. After the garment looked as if it could stand alone, with its cargo of toys, Janie again ran to the airshaft, and called: "Jimmy, Jimmy!" A shrill, piping voice answered her. "Come on down!" she cried.

The thump, thump, of a crutch on the stairs heralded the boy's approach, and the girl held the overalls behind her until after the greetings should take place.

Jimmy Cullen thrust open the door, and stood grinning at her. His wide, good-natured mouth spread almost entirely over his little thin face. There was a wistful appeal about him that spoke of nights of suffering and days of agony. Six years before, Jimmy, a tiny boy of seven, had been crippled for life by an automobile truck. But the injury had not downed his dominating little spirit, nor squelched the joyous boyhood in him. Despite his handicap, he was a sturdy little chap, and Janie had always been very fond of him.

"Gee! I'm glad you're back," he exclaimed, hugging her in an excess of joy.

A sharp rap at the door startled them. For a moment, Janie hesitated before opening the door, then she called: "Come in."

A man stood framed in the doorway—a slim man in a greatcoat, the fur collar of it turned up about his chin, hiding the lower part of his face. A soft hat came well down on his forehead, throwing the upper portion of his face in a shadow. He seemed surprised at seeing them, but inquired, in a pleasant, well modulated voice, for Lem Ladd.

"He isn't at home," Janie replied, staring at him intently. Somewhere in the recesses of her brain was a vague feeling that she knew this man. Mrs. Cullen's snort of astonishment surprised her.

The stranger muttered an apology, and turned to go. "Any message?" Janie asked abruptly.

"No," he replied. No—I—I'll call again."

Before he had barely closed the door behind him, Janie gave a cry of recognition, and ran out into the hall after him. The man had vanished. She turned back into the room, disappointed. There was no doubt in her mind as to the man's identity, though the knowledge of it bewildered her.

"Hum!" muttered Mrs. Cullen. "I'd give a good bit to know what he wants with your pa. 'Tain't the first time he's been here."

Janie shook her head—a gesture which might convey any meaning to the Irish woman.

"Well, I hate to go," she said; "but if I wait till dad gets here it's good-night to me!"

Again came a knock on the door. They gazed at each other quizzically. Janie laughed nervously.

"Seems to be my receiving day," she said. As she opened the door the strained expression vanished from her face, though she grew very pale and swayed a bit. Adam Kent stepped into the room, closing the door behind him. He neither saw nor heard the other occupants, but with eyes only for the girl before him, he took her trembling hands in his own and, drawing her close to him, buried his face deep in her fragrant hair.

"Janie! Janie!" he whispered; "why did you run away? I've had such a search for you!"

CHAPTER IX

LEM LADD'S SECRET

As the man, whom Janie thought she recognized, sprinted down the steps of the tenement and into the street, a tall, rawboned man, standing in the doorway of a bakery shop opposite, straightened suddenly, and gave a smothered exclamation of surprise. He hitched his coat collar up about his neck, and pulled his cap down over his face. Even as he watched the lithe, graceful movements of the man across from him, the other sprang into a taxicab which was apparently waiting at the curb for him, and drove away quickly.

"Well, I'll be hanged!" ejaculated O'Rafferty. "I wonder if I was wrong about that Kent chap, after all!"

The detective had never been quite certain in his own mind regarding Janie's innocence and, in his search for the stolen diamonds, had kept a sharp lookout on all her goings, with the result he had shadowed her on her return trip to Lem Ladd's, and was waiting for her to leave.

The black and white taxi, which had driven up to the tenement opposite him, had hidden from his view the passenger who alighted and, although O'Rafferty had, in a way, associated its presence with Janie, he had had no idea of its occupant's identity. He was torn between a desire to await her exit, and to follow the other man. He decided upon the latter course and, flinging away a half-smoked cigar, he sprang upon the step of a passing street car, just escaping a bad tumble and, possibly, a fractured skull.

As the car turned around the corner, disappearing from view, Adam Kent, coming from the opposite direction, entered the tenement, and climbed the rickety stairs to Janie's apartment, unseen by the detective, who was intent on keeping the taxicab in sight.

In the excess of her delight at seeing Adam again, Janie felt no embarrassment, but clung to him, laughing and crying, her hot little face buried in the folds of his rough coat, her heart beating a violent pit-a-pat against his own. After being introduced to Adam, Mrs. Cullen said she must be going.

"Ye'll be after coming to see us again, Janie," Mrs. Cullen said, at the door. "You won't be forgettin' your old friends?"

"I should say not!" She hugged the kind-hearted old Irish woman feeling a bit contrite at her desire to have them go. After all, Mrs. Cullen was a real friend, and a part of the old life she had left behind was worth clinging to, if only for the kindness she had shown her mother. A tear glistened on her cheek, as she again turned to Adam, after closing the door behind them.

"My, my! What a metamorphosis!" he said, extending his hands, and taking in every detail of her slim, little figure. In truth, Janie had changed amazingly in her new environment. Determined to progress, she had developed under her tutorage like a wild rose-bud bursting into bloom. All the rough edges were gone and, save for discrepancies in her language, she bore herself as one

to the manner born. Adam could not forbear smiling at her conscious delight in his approval. She preened her head on one side, like a gay cockatoo, and giggled her reply.

"What's a metamorphosis? Something good to eat?"

He caught her to him and, in a moment, her self-possession was gone. Her hands fluttered helplessly, then buried themselves in his thick crop of dark hair.

"Oh, Mr. Adam! Mr. Adam!" she whispered; "you did come for me!"

"Didn't you know I would?" he said. "Why did you run away as you did? Didn't you know you had crept into my heart, and that when you left, as you did, there was a great aching void that nothing else could fill? Didn't you know I loved you, Janie?" His voice was husky, as he held the quivering young body in a close embrace.

"You love me? You can't love me?" she sobbed. "Why—why—I can't talk straight!" she added, whimsically.

As a matter of fact, a greater change had taken place in Adam than in Janie. He had completely reconstructed his point of view, thrown aside traditions in which his whole being had been steeped. Even when he had realized that he loved the girl, and to what a great extent she played in his life's happiness, he could not quite bring himself to ask her to marry him.

The search he had to find her but added to his ardor. She became altogether desirable; her parentage, her lack of education were no longer barriers.

"We've opened the portals of life, child," he said. "You've lifted me out of myself. A few weeks ago we didn't exist to each other, now we are all the world there is. My arms and you."

"You—you mean you want to marry me? Marry me with a priest and everything?" In all her dreams, Janie had never quite hoped for anything so wonderful as this. Just to be near him, to love him, to feel that he cared, had seemed the epitome of happiness, and now——

Her naive question found him prepared.

"Yes, Janie, marry you," he said.

"Oh, I'll try so hard to learn, so's you won't be ashamed of me," she whispered.

"We'll learn together, dear."

Anticipating trouble at home, when the announcement would be made, Adam determined that the shock should be a good one. They would be married then and there.

"At the little church around the corner," he said, boyishly eager. "I'll telephone Phyl to meet us there. She's a good scout, is devoted to you, and the romance of the thing will appeal to her."

"All right," said Janie. She was as wax in his hands, and only too anxious to place her life's happiness in his keeping. "I'll fix up a bit while you phone."

A sudden lurch against the door flung it open, and Lem Ladd, half staggered, half fell into the room. Janie gave a cry of terror, and reached for Adam's protecting arm.

Ladd leered at them, bewildered recognition in his maudlin stare, then he gave a grunt, and moved slowly to the center of the room. Steadying himself against the deal table, he shook his fist at Janie.

"Where yuh been?" he growled.

She met his gaze unflinchingly, only a slight tremor of her lower lip betraying her nervousness. She clinched her fist, and replied pugnaciously:

"What's it to you?"

Ladd's crafty, yellow eyes squinted as he looked at her, then at the silent man beside her. A puzzling smile spread over his repellant countenance.

"Who's your friend?" he muttered

"Mr. Kent," she said—"my—my stepfather." A sick loathing for the man whom she called stepfather made her turn her face away, and she did not see the exultant gleam that leaped into his eyes.

"Any relation to Stephen Kent?" he said. He fumbled in his pocket for his tobacco, but his hands trembled so in trying to fill the pipe that he flung it to the table with an oath.

"Son," answered Adam abruptly, making no attempt to hide the disgust with which he regarded the man. He turned to Janie, and his voice was very tender as he said, "I'll be right back, honey. You aren't afraid to be left alone with him for a few minutes?"

"No; oh, no," she replied. He gave her hand an affectionate pat. "Be ready for me, dear."

He had some difficulty in obtaining his home on the telephone; the connection seemed to be crossed. Phyllis herself answered him, and her voice sounded blurred and unreal. She was so excited over the news he imparted that she did not tell him their father had just come in, looking strangely worn and ill, after having a long session with a strange man whom he had met in the foyer below.

Adam's announcement of his immediate marriage to Janie was so startling that only as he started to hang up the receiver was she minded to tell him. But she refrained, fearing to cast a damper over his happiness, and instead asked him where she could "reach him on the telephone if it were necessary."

Adam was surprised at her request, but looking at the telephone he was using gave her the number.

Lem Ladd slumped into a chair, and as Adam closed the door behind him he leaned forward suspiciously.

"What's he want?"

Janie shrugged her shoulders, but she did not reply. As she turned to pass him to go to the room which had been her own he caught her wrist in a rough grasp which made her cry out. She winced, but looked at him fearlessly. "D'ye know where I've been?" he said, menace in his voice.

"No."

"Well, I've been on the Island, because of you."

"You make me sick!" she retorted.

"It's a fine way to treat a hard-workin' respectable man that's allus been kind to you," he half sobbed in a maudlin way, but as she turned to go again he straightened suspiciously.

"Where you goin'?"

"That's nothing to you."

"Ain't it now! Don't you try runnin' off again, or I'll——" The fearless look in the girl's pale face irritated his bemuddled sense. With an oath he swung the chair against which he was leaning into the air, intent on striking her with it.

"Oh, have a heart!" exclaimed a clear voice in the doorway, and the chair slowly lowered. The owner of the voice came in, quietly closing the door behind him. With the lithe movements of a panther he covered the distance across the room. For a moment he stood between the girl and the menacing brute, his dark eyes glittering under the overshadowing brim of his hat.

Janie was conscious only of the face in a shadow, a high turned collar, and a vague resemblance to some one; then she ran quickly out of the room into her own.

With trembling fingers she straightened the folds of her little serge gown, adjusted her disordered hair and pinched her cheeks to make them pink again. Then she sat down on the tumbled cot to await Adam's return.

"Your girl?" the stranger said at Janie's exit.

"Yeh," Ladd answered. "Say, you better beat it quick before he get's back."

"Who?"

"Young Kent."

The stranger turned quickly. "What's he doing here?"

Ladd chuckled. "Come to see her," he answered. "Jest as I figured. He's sweet on her! Thunder, it's rich."

For an instant the younger man paused, then he hitched his shoulders in a peculiarly expressive manner and snapped his fingers.

"Great! Immense! The very thing!"

"What?"

"Listen!" With hand alert, he waited. The sound of some one climbing the stairs could be distinctly heard. "Where'll I go?"

"In there—my room," Ladd answered thickly. He pointed to the half-open door at his right.

"Sure no one will go in there?"

"Sure. Besides there's a closet."

Before Adam opened the hall door the man who had made himself his counterpart had vanished in Lem Ladd's room; and Ladd himself was drunkenly lying back in the one comfortable chair the room afforded, his feet on the deal table, his pipe in the side of his mouth unlighted.

"Where is she?" Adam asked, making a rapid survey of the room.

Ladd squinted one little yellow eye wickedly and took the vile-smelling pipe from his mouth. Before replying he glanced sideways at the room to the right, the door of which stood open the smallest trifle.

"Janie?" he said; "in her room. What's the idee, anyway?" Adam paid no heed to his question, but called:

"Janie! Janie! are you ready?"

"Where you goin'?" cried Ladd, suddenly staggering to his feet. The chair fell over backwards with the movement, making a resounding thud as it hit the floor. "Where you goin'?" he repeated, as no answer was forthcoming. "That girl o' mine's been galavantin' around too much lately. I'm goin' to put a stop to it. She's too dern fresh; she's gotta be taken down a bit and I——"

Janie answered Adam by entering the room; with utter contempt for her stepfather's futile attempt at authority, she stepped to the man she was going to marry.

"I'm going with him, dad," she said, "and you can't stop me."

"Goin' with—say, I'll have the law on you!" snarled the big man. "There's a law agin men who carry off young girls!"

Adam laughed. "Janie and I are going to be married," he said quietly.

"Married!" said Ladd. "Married!" He seemed to grow suddenly sober as the full import of the other's words dawned upon him. "Married!"

"Uhu!" said Janie.

Ladd swayed. The red receded from his face, leaving him strangely pale, then suddenly he laughed—a nasty laugh which caused the man and girl to draw back in amazement, not unmixed with terror.

"Good Lord! It's rich!" he howled. "If your mother only knowed, Janie! If your mother only knowed! I'll be paid back for all her sneers, all her high and mighty airs! She was too good for me, she was—and now; oh, it's rich! Abruptly his laughter ceased, his voice lost its husky thick quality and became cold, metallic, clear. "Do you know who she is?" he said, thrusting his face close to Adam's. "Do you know who her father is?"

"Do you know, dad; do you?" gasped the girl.

"Ask his pa—he'll tell you; Stephen Kent knows!" Ladd laughed; "ask him."

"What are you driving at?" Adam exclaimed, a sickening fear gripping at his heart. "Go on; what do you mean!"

"I oughta let you do it, but I can't. 'Tain't natural! You're Stephen Kent's son—well, she's his daughter!"

The world grew black with Janie. A great cloud seemed to envelop her—crush her. She put up her hands to thrust aside the horror that was coming toward her. Adam's cry of rage as he leaped for her stepfather, Ladd's whimper of terror, seemed miles away. She stood weighted to the spot, unable to move—almost unable to see or feel. There was no doubt in her mind as to the truth of Lem's statement. She had seen him and Stephen Kent together; they knew each other. It explained Kent's hatred for her, his desire to be rid of her presence. Even the red hair was damning proof that Lem spoke truly.

"It's a lie!" Adam cried; "a lie!"

"It ain't," Lem whimpered, suddenly cowed. "He come to me before she was born and gimme a thousand dollars to marry her mother; he's been payin' me ever since to keep still! Ask him! He can't deny it! Ask him! It's the honest truth!"

Adam loosened his hold on the great bull-neck, and his hands dropped like dead things to his side. On a second thought he straightened up.

"Come, Janie," he said, turning to the girl who stood lifeless. "We'll go to him. He'll have to tell us the truth. I think this man is lying."

Mechanically, Janie reached for her hat and coat. As she did so Mrs. Cullen pushed open the hall door. Her usually red face was pale with excitement, she was breathing with difficulty, as though she had been running.

"Mr. Kent!" she panted, "you're—you're wanted on the telephone—it's something's happened—your father—I think—they say—he's dead!"

Adam looked at her with glazed eyes. For a moment he hesitated, started to move toward the door, then slumped into the nearest chair in an utter collapse.

CHAPTER X

JANIE MEETS O'RAFFERTY

IT was Phyllis who was waiting for Adam at the other end of the wire. Stephen Kent had suddenly become very ill; the heart attack which he feared at all times had come upon him with more than its usual violence, and he lay between life and death, a gray-white, shadowy figure, rigid and cold. Mrs. Cullen in receiving the message had misconstrued Phyllis's message to say he was dead; in reality she had said he was dying.

The girl waited at the telephone, impatiently rattling the receiver, unable to comprehend why her brother did not answer. When the operator informed her there was no one at the other end of the wire she hung up the receiver in despair, turning away bewildered, unable to understand what had happened.

"Where is Adam!" she sobbed. "Where is Adam? Father will die without seeing him!" All her life Adam had been her mainstay in time of trouble. She was lost without him.

It was too early to reach him at the church where the wedding was to take place, but she telephoned and left word for him to come home immediately, without waiting for the ceremony.

For hours it seemed to the girl as she sat by her father's bedside, her eyes glued to the clock, starting at every sound and wondering why her brother did not come.

When Stephen Kent finally opened his eyes, with the light of returning consciousness in them, the first thing he said was:

"D'ye know where the girl Janie is? I want to see her."

As Adam fell forward, almost stunned by the double shock, Janie came out of her lethergy with a cry of dismay. His white face and cold hands made her fear for his life. All else was forgotten in the desire to save him. He tried to speak to her, but the words were a mere unintelligible mumble.

"What'll I do? What'll I do?" she said, looking first to her stepfather, then at Mrs. Cullen, who stood wringing her hands and murmuring:

"The poor boy, the poor boy! Sure, his father's death has killed him."

"Whisky!" said Janie; "have you got any?" Mrs. Cullen shook her head helplessly. "Nary a drop," she answered. "Me ould man went on the water-wagon when my Jimmy was hurted—praise be—and there ain't been a bit o' liquor in my house sence, not that I'm agin it in sickness, but——"

"I've got some!" said Ladd suddenly. He seemed to pull himself out of a trance. His talk with Adam had completely sobered him. His fists clinched viciously as he strode past him to his own room.

"Wait for the whisky, dear," Janie said. "Then you'll be strong enough. You're all weak now."

"Taxi," he whispered again. "Get a taxi. Home!"

"Will you call a taxi?" Janie asked Mrs. Cullen. "We've got to go."

Mrs. Cullen fluttered about helplessly; then burst forth, "I'll get one and get the hot water, too," as she rushed out of the apartment and up to her own.

The sordid drama that had taken place in the kitchen had not been lost on the silent witness in Lem Ladd's bedroom. Leaning against the door, which was ajar, in such a manner as to be unseen, the man watched and heard Adam Kent and Ladd in their dispute. A quick intake of his breath, a nervous snap of the fingers showed the irritation he felt at Ladd's giving away a secret which had been a source of revenue for him so many years, although until now he had not been aware of Ladd's secret, though he wondered at the income.

"Damn fool!" he muttered under his breath. "I didn't know he had such a hold on the old man, and now he's cooked his goose!"

The realization that the girl was likewise a child of Stephen Kent's made him strain to get a better look at her. Little sympathy showed in his cold dark face, only a keen interest in the girl who, he now learned for the first time, was his sister. Before Ladd cautiously opened the door and stood facing him he had already reached for the whisky bottle and held it in his hand, an enigmatical smile on his slim dark face.

"Satan is a good pal, my friend," he breathed in a scarcely audible whisper. "He's played right into our hands."

"Blast his soul!" snarled Ladd, his face livid with hatred, his yellow eyes bloodshot. "I'll fix him. Tried to choke me! The whelp!"

"Shut up!" came through the other's clinched teeth. "Are you mad?"

"Wanted to marry my girl! Haw!" continued Ladd, muttering to himself. "I'll fix him. I'll——"

The other man caught his arm with a grip of steel, digging his long, slender fingers viciously in Ladd's soft flesh. "Cut it!" he said; "get down to brass tacks and work fast. Now's our chance, and we'll never have another like it."

Ladd rubbed his bruised arm silently while he watched the man shake the contents of a phial which he drew from his pocket into the whisky bottle.

"Knock-out drops?" he queried, running his tongue over his cracked lips, very like a cur-dog licking his chops.

"Yes. Give him a stiff drink, and the Kent jewels are ours." He thrust the glass in the hairy hand Ladd eagerly extended, paying no heed to the giant's low whistle of surprise and admiration.

"Get rid of the girl," he admonished. "Send her away for a doctor or medicine." Then he gave the huge brute a shove into the doorway.

Adam managed to stand up as Ladd re-entered the room, carrying the bottle of liquor, and he reached out eagerly for the whisky and poured out a considerable quantity into the glass which Janie held for him with hands which trembled violently.

The liquor burned Adam's throat as he drank it, but he managed to swallow the equal of two stiff drinks before he placed the glass on the table.

"Taxi's waiting," he murmured, turning toward the door, with Janie's hand on his arm. He started toward it, walking uncertainly, then he stumbled; the blur before his eyes became thicker, a dead feeling crept over his entire body, the sound of rushing water filled his ears; he tried to walk, but couldn't; he seemed sinking—sinking into a black, black depth.

As he fell, a limp, inert figure at her feet, Janie cried out in terror, "He's dead, dead! Oh, my God! He's dead!"

For the instant Ladd looked frightened. Suppose he had taken too much of the chloral? He didn't want murder on his soul! His craven spirit quailed at the thought; then he remembered the other man's command.

"Get a doctor!" he cried.

"Where? I don't know any since Dr. Smith died. I——"

"Go to the drug-store!"

"You go, dad!" she sobbed. "I'll stay with him! You go get a doctor."

Ladd shook his head. "No, you can run faster'n I can—I'll fetch him to. Go 'long. I'll hist him on the bed while you're gone." Janie hesitated, torn between fear for Adam and distrust of her stepfather, then with a backward glance at the unconscious man she rushed blindly from the little flat, stumbling helplessly against the banister as she ran down the stairs, two at a time.

She reached the corner drug-store in a daze. At her impassioned question as to where she could find a doctor, the pharmacist directed her to one in the next block, and she rushed out of the store without a thank you.

When she met the physician himself, he said he could not come right away, as he had another patient, but very considerately telephoned a colleague of his, who promised to be right over. As she rushed out of the physician's office and around the corner which led into her street, she almost collided with a tall, gaunt man who, on drawing aside, emitted a low whistle and removed his hat.

"The little overalls girl! By all that's holy!" he ejaculated. Janie stared up at him with uncomprehending eyes, struggling to remember that square-visaged face with the keen gray, not unkindly eyes; then she recalled the night at the Marlborough Hotel.

"Oh!" she gasped; "you—you're the detective!"

"I am that," said O'Rafferty, with a grim smile; but when she started to move on he laid a detaining hand on her arm. "What's the hurry?"

"Please let me go on," she said pathetically. "I was after a doctor; he's awfully sick."

"Who?" asked O'Rafferty suspiciously. He had lost the man he was shadowing when the taxi had shot around the corner, and was not in a particularly good humor. He had retraced his steps, thinking that the man he was covering might have dodged him and came back. Though this was exactly what Joe Le Moyne had done without being conscious of being watched, O'Rafferty had arrived after he had mounted the stairs to Ladd's flat, and the man O'Rafferty was now watching from his vantage-point was Adam Kent, whom he had seen go in. "Who's sick?" he asked sharply, as Janie tried to wriggle away.

"Mr. Kent—Adam Kent," she said, with a sob in her voice. "My—my—we're going to be married," she added softly, denying in her own heart Ladd's story.

O'Rafferty gave an incredulous whistle. "He's sick, is he?" he said, his alert eyes searching her pale face. "You're sure it isn't that other guy you're shielding—the fellow that looks like him?"

Janie drew back indignantly. "Come upstairs and see for yourself if you don't believe me!" she said. "But please let me go, he's awfully sick—just like dead, and I can't trust dad with him!"

O'Rafferty hesitated. "Adam Kent, is it?" he mused, holding her arm. "What's he doing here? Oh, yes; he's your sweetheart, you said. Come on—tell me—what d'ye know about the other chap?"

"Nothing, nothing at all!" she cried frantically. "I told you everything that night at the hotel. Oh, there's the taxi we ordered to take Adam home. Please, please let me go!"

O'Rafferty removed his hand, and she darted across the street and up the stairs. He stood watching the doorway and the cab that drew up to the curb. Later, when a man descended the stairs, he crossed the street in time to see him enter the taxi and drive away. The address the man gave was Marlborough Hotel, so O'Rafferty turned away satisfied that Janie was telling the truth.

CHAPTER XI

BEHIND BOLTED DOORS

THE instant the door of the flat closed behind Janie the man in Ladd's room sprang from his hiding-place.

"Bolt the door," he commanded. Ladd obeyed him, stepping over Adam's inert figure to reach the door.

"My brother!" said the man, looking down at him with an unpleasant smile. "I've a score to settle with you also! You had all the good things of life handed to you on a platter, while I've had to fight and lie and steal for the right to live, merely because your mother was respectable and wore a wedding ring—and mine didn't. Hum; some day the balance will even up, my friend brother, and the son of the crook will come into his own with the son of the lady. Bah! It's a devil of a mess!" He flung his hat and coat from him with the sudden gesture so all his own. "Give me a hand, and we'll toss him on the bed," he commanded the giant watching him.

There was a strong resemblance between the two men, further accentuated by the mustache the elder had adopted to look like Adam, and the artificial gray in the hair on the temples. The man leaning over him apparently realized it was no easy task he had set for himself—that of impersonating his half-brother—for he seemed puzzled for a moment.

"We'll have to work fast," he said. "The girl won't be long. Love makes nimble feet."

"What's the dope?" said Ladd.

"Take him in your room." Silently, with some little effort, they lifted the drugged man, and carrying him into the bed-room flung him on the unmade bed. "You take off his clothes while I get out of mine, and be quick about it."

"You ain't goin' to do it! You wouldn't dare!" Ladd gasped in an awed whisper.

"Hem. Watch me!" In breathless haste the man tore his clothing from him and, as Ladd removed each of Adam's garments, he replaced his own with it. They fitted him as though made for him. "Where's his keys?" he muttered, digging in the trousers pocket. "Ah! here they are," as his fingers touched the bits of metal; "they're the most essential."

He sprang across the room to get a view of himself in the cracked mirror, adjusting his tie as he did so. Apparently dissatisfied with his appearance he again surveyed the silent man on the bed, with the result that he gave his mustache a twist, and ran a comb through his hair.

"Say," muttered Ladd, holding up the clothing he had discarded, "whatch ye goin' to do with these?"

"Doll him up in them. Hurry."

"By heaven!" Ladd looked at him in admiration, "you're a live one—but—here's a letter of your'n—Mr. Joe Le Moyne—and——"

"Leave it in!" ejaculated the other sharply; "and the Kent girl's pin is in the vest pocket, too; it wasn't worth lifting, but it's good stuff now."

"You mean——"

"Sure. If I can pass for him—he can pass for me. Savve? It'll give me a few hours' leeway anyway——"

"But we——"

"You can vamoose just as I'm going to. Listen!"

The sound which disturbed him was caused by Mrs. Cullen, who had climbed laboriously down the stairs with the dishpan of water she had heated, after sending for the taxicab, and now, on finding the door to Janie's flat locked, she gave it a strong kick, which splattered the hot water down the front of her calico gown and caused an unpleasant feeling of heat, which irritated the usually mild Irishwoman.

"Bad cess to yez!" she exclaimed. "What air yez after lockin' the door fur—when you knew I'd be comin' back with the water?"

"Who is it? What d'ye want?" Ladd asked cautiously at the door, without drawing the bolt.

"What do I want? Sure, I don't want nothin'!" expostulated Mrs. Cullen. The dishpan of water was heavy and clumsy to hold. "It's Mrs. Cullen, and I've fetched the hot water you do be needin'."

"We don't need any now," said Ladd.

"What—at—you don't——"

"The doctor's here," whispered Le Moyne, prompting the slow wits of the other.

"Yeh; the doctor's here."

"Oh!" Mrs. Cullen turned away muttering. "The blathskites! Where's Janie? She should be lettin' me in, doctor or no doctor! Bad cess to that Lem Ladd, I says."

"How long's he good for?" Ladd said, returning to the bed-room, and nodding toward Adam.

"Twelve hours anyway; maybe longer." With deft

fingers Le Moyne had managed to get Adam into a good portion of his clothing. "You can tip the bulls off that the man they want is here; it'll give me an alibi as regards the jewels, and my precious brother a few bad hours. If it weren't for that Bertillon system we could fix him!"

He drew on Adam's top-coat and hat, and threw back his shoulders in the straightforward manner characteristic of Adam.

"I'm going now, before the girl gets back. You beat it, too. I'll take my toy along for safe keeping," he added, dropping the little automatic into his coat-pocket.

"Too late!" ejaculated Ladd. For Janie was rattling the door-knob and frantically demanding admittance. For a second Le Moyne hesitated, then he darted across the kitchen and into her room. "Let her in," he said.

She looked suspiciously at Ladd as he opened the door, and ran immediately to the bed-room where he indicated Adam was. As she stepped inside the room, Ladd slammed the door shut after her, locking it; simultaneously, Le Moyne dashed for the hall-door, saying as he did so:

"Mike's, two a. m. Good-by!"

With a premonition that the bolted door boded evil, Janie sprang toward the bed where Aday lay. Her quick eye noted the interchange of clothing at a glance; she gave a cry and turned to face her stepfather, only to find she was a prisoner in his room. Like a flash came to her the memory of the man who had interceded for her against Lem Ladd earlier in the evening. Intuitively, she knew him to be the man who looked like Adam, the man who had robbed the Kents, the man O'Rafferty accused her of aiding. Something told her he was here or had been but a short time before, and that even now he was wearing Adam's clothing, and that Adam wore his.

She had no doubts that he intended to impersonate Adam, and with some ulterior motive, probably another robbery. Feverishly she examined the garments Adam wore, and she gave a suppressed shriek as her hand came into contact with the diamond brooch that had been stolen from Phyllis.

Then a panic struck her! Everything seemed to be planted to ruin Adam. Adam, who lay stone cold, gray-faced, motionless. With a scream of terrified impotence she flung herself against the locked door, beating her fists upon the panels and demanding to be released.

"Let me out! Let me out!"

Ladd chuckled as he heard her. Deliberately he drew on his own coat and cap, and as he left the apartment, locking the door behind him, he laughed.

"Pound away, my lady! You don't get out till them sparklers is hid away for safe keeping and the bulls has that sweetie of yourn."

CHAPTER XII

A DARING ATTEMPT

JOE LE MOYNE was a daring man, also a clever one; clever enough to have made a comfortable, perhaps luxurious, living in an honest way, but the danger of the game he played appealed to him. The gamble with law, his liberty as the jack-pot, was a keener delight to him than the diamonds he stole.

Six months before he had had an occasion to call upon a lawyer—a shyster—who had offices in the same building with Kent & Kent Needless to say, at that time he had taken precautions to hide his identity which, being clean-shaven and close-cropped, was not hard to do; but an intense desire to see the man who was his father, and the junior partner, his brother, whom he felt had defrauded him of his birthright, tempted him to throw discretion to the winds and enter Kent's office.

Stephen had been absent, but Adam present. Le Moyne had stated his business in a few words, left a retainer, but had never returned.

In that few moments' conversation he had noted the resemblance between himself and the young lawyer; a resemblance which he could utilize to good advantage and further accentuate by developing a mustache such as Adam wore and by touching his hair at the temples with gray.

At that time Le Moyne was several pounds under weight, wiry and thin. His quick eye took in all details of the lawyer's figure and dress, and he determined to take on flesh, or pad to the necessary weight. While Adam was perhaps five years his junior, Le Moyne easily looked that much younger, his dare-devil catch-as-catch-can life having kept him youthful, whereas Adam's studious one had aged him.

The police had his record and likeness, but with smooth-shaven head and face, he figured making himself the counterpart of Adam Kent would not only assist him in his burglaries, but give him an alibi as well. There was a keen delight to him in the thought that perhaps Adam's impeccable reputation would be tarnished by his felonies, that he would bring sorrow to his father who had denied him. That Stephen Kent probably did not know of his existence did not alter his hatred for him. His mother, vicious and unbridled, had sown the seeds of hatred in him from babyhood, withholding the facts of her marriage, and subsequent divorce when Kent learned her real character, but leading the boy to believe her a much-wronged woman; she had died before her revenge was complete, though her son bade fair to carry it out, and, as he said, "Satan was a good pal." Everything was playing into his hands, even the detective who shadowed him.

After leaving Lem Ladd, he dashed down the rickety stairs of the tenement-house, drawing a quick breath of relief as the cool, bracing air hit his face. For a moment he hesitated in the door, then he noticed the taxicab that Adam had ordered at the curb, the driver looking about impatiently, no doubt a bit puzzled for being called to such a neighborhood.

He jumped into it quickly, saying, "Marlborough Hotel," and sinking back into the rusty felt cushions, reeking with the odor of tobacco, he mentally reviewed the actions that had gone before, and the course he intended to pursue.

Only too well he realized he was going to play a daring game, but danger was the breath of life to him, and he counted on the confusion of Stephen Kent's death to assist him.

At the hotel he alighted, and after fumbling in pockets strange to him he produced the necessary change to pay the chauffeur and, dismissing him, sauntered into the hotel lobby.

As he entered the elevator the colored boy looked questioningly at him, and he stepped behind him to avoid the searching black eyes.

"They been mighty anxious for you, Mistah Kent!" the boy said. "Every few minutes Miss Kent she come to the elevator and say, 'Ain't he comed yet, Sam? Ain't you seen 'em?' They sure will be glad you've comed."

With hands that trembled the merest trifle, he fitted the key in the lock and stepped quickly inside. The room

was in darkness save for a shaft of light from the half-opened hall door which led to the sleeping-rooms. He closed the door noiselessly behind him and, crossing the room, closed the half-open door also. As he did so the telephone on the desk jangled and, almost before he could step behind the curtains of the French window, Phyllis appeared to answer it.

She wore a negligee and looked woefully pale and worn from her long, tiring vigil. Her voice sounded strained and weary as she answered the call. "No, he isn't in yet. We are expecting him every minute. I—I don't know where he is." She swayed a bit as she hung up the receiver, and for a breathless second the man behind the curtain felt a wave of compassion for the half-sister who did not know of his existence. But the instant she disappeared he stepped from his hiding-place, and with quick, deft fingers destroyed the connection. A low, uneasy murmur of voices could be heard in the chambers off the hall, but after listening cautiously a moment, Le Moyne decided he would not be disturbed, and set about his self-imposed task. He did not remove his hat or coat; in case any one entered the room they accentuated his likeness to Adam and were an indication that he also had just come. With the appearance of one used to his surroundings, he stepped to the place in the wall wherein the lock-box and its safe were hidden from view by a paneled picture. Very quietly he lifted the picture from the hook and leaned it against the wall, disclosing the black knob of the box. The old combination was familiar to him, but he knew that beyond a doubt it had been changed; he realized he was taking a long chance in thinking that the diamonds still reposed in this safe.

With fingers trained to an uncanny sense of touch, he toyed with the lock, his quick ear noting each sound. As the door swung open, he started back in dismay, for some one was rattling the outside door and demanding to be admitted in almost frantic tones.

After exhausting all her strength in futile attempts to open the bed-room door, Janie again turned to the silent figure lying in the bed. She shook him, begging him to wake up—she flung water in his face, but Adam did not move. Then she thought of the fire-escape.

After some pulling and tugging at the window, which had been kept closed for the entire winter, she pulled off her shoes and, hitting the glass with all her force, shattered the pane. She tore away enough of the broken pieces to allow herself to wiggle through; then, drawing on the overcoat which Le Moyne had discarded, she stepped out onto the fire-escape.

It was old, and the trip, four flights down, was perilous and nerve-racking, but she made it safely.

A north-bound car stopped to admit her, and if the other passengers noticed her strange apparel, she was unaware of it. Her one object was to get to the Kents, and obtain assistance for Adam—she was afraid to call on the police for fear that the thing her stepfather and the stranger had planned would actually take place; namely, Adam Kent to be taken into custody as the diamond thief, who so strangely resembled him.

At a corner drug-store she tried to telephone, but was informed no one answered; so, upon reaching the hotel, she rushed blindly up the stairs, and beating on the door begged admittance. It was her voice Joe Le Moyne heard just as he was in the act of opening the second safe door. Turning quickly, he stood facing the door. Again she pounded on the door, sobbing:

"Let me in! Please—please let me in!"

With a voice carefully disguised, he inquired who was there.

"It's Janie!" she replied. "I've got to see you! Please."

"In the morning," Le Moyne answered. He stepped close to the door and almost whispered to her: "Mr. Kent is very ill, and cannot be disturbed to-night."

"Who are you?" Janie cried, her suspicions alert.

"The doctor," Le Moyne answered glibly.

"I can't wait until morning," Janie raised her voice. "I'll be too late! I've got to see Mrs. Kent! I've got to! If you don't open the door I'll scream until you let me in! I'll call them downstairs. I'll——" Her voice rose to a shrill scream, and she kicked against the door.

Le Moyne swore softly, then unbolted the door. She dashed inside, for a moment unable to distinguish any object in the almost dark room. His steel hand grasped her wrist as she passed him, and he swung her around, facing him; before she could cry out he had placed his other hand over her mouth.

"Now, what do you want?" he said.

She tried to speak through her closed teeth. "You did come here! You did come here!"

There was a silent struggle in the semi-darkness, ended abruptly by the room being flooded with light. Phyllis stood in the hall doorway, her eyes dark with terror, as she gazed at what seemed an unexplainable situation.

"Adam," she cried shilly; "Adam!"

Le Moyne loosened his hold on Janie, and the suddenness of her release sent her reeling against the wall. The light almost blinded her, and she put her hands over her eyes with a gesture which looked very like guilt. She was unable to speak, choking and coughing from the strangle-hold the man had had on her slim throat.

"Janie," Phyllis exclaimed in the same strained voice. She had heard voices in the hall, the opening and closing of the doors, but had not at first realized that it came from their apartment. The sight of the man she thought her brother and the girl he loved in a violent struggle had been a tremendous shock. Le Moyne did not reply in words to her exclamation; he merely nodded toward the open lock-box, while he utilized the time to collect his faculties as to how best to meet this new situation.

There was no need for words. At one glance Phyllis saw the open safe-door and her missing pin gleaming on the front of Janie's gown, where she had thrust it after finding it in the pocket of the coat Adam wore.

"Oh, Janie," she cried, "I didn't think it of you! After all, you were a thief! I could never have believed it; and we've loved you so! Oh, Adam, I'm so sorry for you—I'm so sorry."

Le Moyne shook his head, and stepping to the safe closed the door. This threw him in a shadow, and his features were barely distinguishable.

At Phyllis' accusation Janie's eyes dilated. The horror it inspired numbed her. She could only stare at the girl like a stricken animal, unable to move, unable to cry out it was untrue. It had never dawned upon her that the clever criminal she had sought to circumvent would turn the tide of his crime against her. She struggled against her paralysis, striving to say the words that formed in her mind and her tongue refused to utter. Something seemed to snap, and a voice strangely unlike her own cried out, "Miss Phyllis! Miss Phyllis, he isn't Adam! Can't you see he isn't Adam?"

The man shrugged his shoulders and, reaching toward her, pulled the diamond pin from the front of her dress and handed it to Phyllis.

"Miss Phyllis," Janie cried frantically; "can't you see the difference? This is the man who came here that night

and robbed you—the man I took for Adam! Adam is at Lem Ladd's, drugged; and this man has on his clothes—he's made up to look like Adam to rob you! Can't you understand?"

But Phyllis only looked at her—cold incredulity in her gaze. Le Moyne snatched at the cue Janie gave him. "I was drugged," he said thickly, making an effort to disguise his voice. "She and her stepfather drugged me and left me a prisoner while she came here to rob you. She took my keys to get in. There is the open safe to prove it."

"Oh, Janie! Janie!" wailed Phyllis.

Janie looked from one to the other, unable to comprehend the situation. "Can't you understand?" she cried, beating her hands together—"Adam is drugged and he is back there! My God! Miss Phyllis, this is the man who looks like him! The man the police want! I saw him the night he fetched your jewels to my stepfather to keep! They work together—they do! Adam is there! Oh, please, please call some one and go to him; please!"—she sank into a chair sobbing at the futility of her plea.

"What has happened?" exclaimed Mrs. Kent in the doorway. "Your father is aroused and insists on determining the cause of all this disturbance. Oh, Adam, you've come—I've been so worried—where have you been? Don't you know Stephen almost died with a terrible heart attack? Do you realize how awful it would have been if he had done so and you away?"

She did not give Le Moyne a chance to reply, for which he was grateful, but turned abruptly to Phyllis—not seeing Janie huddled in the chair. "I can't do anything with your father, Phyllis; he says he is all right now, and is going to get up, regardless. You go to him."

"Alive!" Janie's white lips scarcely moved. "Alive—he isn't dead?"

"Janie," ejaculated Mrs. Kent, "where did you come from?"

"Thank God, he isn't dead!" was the girl's reply. "We must get Adam right away! We must!"

"Is the girl crazy?" asked Mrs. Kent.

"I'll call the police," said Phyllis quietly; after the first shock of what seemed Janie's perfidy, she roused herself. There was only one thing to be done. If Janie were a thief she must be treated as one. She reached for the receiver, rattling it several times, but she could get no connection on the telephone.

"I—I can't get any one on the phone," she said.

Mrs. Kent stood looking first at one then the other. She had not yet comprehended what was taking place.

Le Moyne took the receiver from Phyllis's limp hand. "The wire has been cut," he said quietly—"it's out of commission."

"Oh!"

"What is it all about?" cried Mrs. Kent in a shrill voice. "Won't you please tell me! I'm almost insane as it is, with Stephen so nearly escaping death—and unable to find you, Adam! And now you are all acting like mad! What is it? What are you doing here, Janie?"

"He isn't Adam!" Janie reiterated in a choking voice. "Please—please, Mrs. Kent, believe me! You know about the man who looks like Adam—you know there is such a man! Here he is, and Adam is——"

"Nonsense!" said Le Moyne. "I'll go downstairs for the police." As he started to pass Janie she sprang at him like a little wildcat, clinging with arms tight about his neck, shriekly wildly.

"You shan't go! You shan't go! You're trying to ruin Adam, and I won't let you—I won't let you!"

Stephen Kent's pale face and shaken figure in the doorway broke the tension even before he spoke. He leaned back against the casement, a wraith of a man—but his voice was vibrant with passion.

"In God's name, what's wrong?"

"Father! Father!" cried Phyllis, running to him. She caught his arm as he swayed and assisted him to the sofa before he fell from exhaustion.

Janie's surprise at seeing the man she had fancied dead before her in the flesh—the man who knew her identity, was perhaps her father—caused her to loosen her hold on Le Moyne. He took advantage of this and the fact that Kent's presence drew the attention from him. He quickly flung open the hall-door to make his escape, coming face to face with McCall, the house detective, and O'Rafferty, from headquarters. With them was the man whose counterpart he had become—Adam Kent!

With a snarl of defeat he drew back, accidentally hitting the French windows, and out he went.

CHAPTER XII

CONCLUSION

AFTER O'Rafferty had seen the taxi drive away with the man he supposed was Adam Kent, he had stolled away, chewing viciously on a huge black cigar as he ruminated over the strangeness of a prosperous young attorney being in that neighborhood. Suddenly he paused abruptly, snapping his fingers at his own credulity and immediately retraced his steps. He was uncertain as to what he had expected to see, though he was not surprised to come face to face with Lem Ladd in the doorway of the tenement from which Adam Kent had departed.

Ladd drew back with an exclamation of terrified dismay; but when O'Rafferty's grip of steel brought him to a standstill he growled, "Say, what's eatin' you?"

"Where so fast, my friend?" said the detective. Ladd's squinting yellow eyes leered at him.

"Can't a man go out of his own home for a breath of fresh air without a fly-cop nabbin' him!" he snarled.

"Suppose I join you for that bit of fresh air," said O'Rafferty pleasantly enough, though he did not remove his hand from the other's arm.

Ladd looked at him suspiciously; he gulped as though something were choking him and, stepping out of the doorway, walked beside the officer for a few paces. His curiosity overcame his already beclouded judgment, and he glanced now and then at his captor, striving to learn just how much he knew. He was actually conscious of the drugged man in the rooms above, and an uncontrollable fear seized him lest O'Rafferty knew of it also and was stalling for time. Le Moyne had just left in the taxicab, and until his mission was accomplished and Le Moyne himself out of the city, Ladd would quake in his boots. His ears, keenly acute for any suspicious sounds, seemed to hear Janie's cries for help, although it was evidently imagination on his part caused by his cowardice, for the detective strolled off with him, apparently unconscious of the tumult within Lem's breast.

But Ladd reckoned without his man. Not for nothing had O'Rafferty gained his reputation for shrewdness, for success at always tracking down his quarry, and Ladd's suspicious side-long glances were not unnoted. The curiosity which he strove unsuccessfully to hide told a tale to O'Rafferty. The nonchalant air of the ruffian and his feeble attempt at whistling only further added to his

conviction that Ladd was up to something outside the pale of the law. That the man was a coward he was certain; also, he had nothing to tie to him other than drunkenness and general disorderliness; but the more he thought of the incident concerning Adam Kent the more positive he was that something crooked was going on.

He allowed Ladd to lead the way, and that worthy, gradually quickening his steps, managed to guide him several blocks from the tenement-house where they had met. Only when out of sight of the building did Ladd draw a breath of safety. Not if he could help it would O'Rafferty hear Janie's screams if she chose to make an outcry.

Suddenly Ladd wriggled loose from the detective's detaining hand, and with a poor attempt at good-nature said:

"Well, I got my air; guess I'll be goin' back."

"As I've nothing to do I'll go back with you," said O'Rafferty, wheeling about just as his suspect did. Ladd suddenly saw red, his little yellow eyes glared. "Say, what the devil's eatin' you?" he snarled. "What you shadderin' me for? You can't tie nothin' to me—s'help me, you can't."

"I don't know about that," said the detective quietly. "What's Diamond Joe doing in your place?" It was a long shot O'Rafferty took, but it landed, for Ladd seemed to crumple, his red blowsy face became green. He tried to speak, but was unable to make a sound. Before he could make a move to get away the officer had whipped out an automatic, saying quietly, "Stay where you are, Ladd; I mean business."

The intuition which had been a guiding-star for him many times had not failed him in this instance for, though the man he had seen enter the cab unquestionably looked like Adam Kent, and had given his address, he—O'Rafferty—had not been satisfied. Ladd's actions had confirmed his suspicions, and though Ladd quickly regained his composure and said, with surprising poise, "How'd you know?" he was certain something was afoot of more than usual craftiness.

"So Diamond Joe's at your place, is he?" he said calmly. "I thought as much."

"Betcher life he is," said Ladd with alacrity; "he's dead to the world with knock-out drops, and I'm going to get my reward for turning him over and——"

"Is that so?" said O'Rafferty coolly. "I suppose you were on your way to the station-house to turn over your surprising information?"

"I was that," said Ladd; "and you ain't goin' to get my reward——"

"We'll see," said O'Rafferty. Come along with me."

"Whatcher goin' to do?" growled Ladd.

O'Rafferty did not answer, but keeping a hand on the giant's shoulder, he led the way to a drug-store where he called up the station house and asked for some one to come and take charge of his prisoner immediately.

"Say, what's the matter with you?" Lem growled—"think I'm handin' you a 'bull' story? S'help me, I ain't. That guy's over there dead to the world—you go see for yourself; it's honest truth I am tellin' ye—see for yourself."

"That's what I intend to do," said O'Rafferty; "and you're coming with me!"

That was just what Ladd had had no intention of doing. He was wise enough to know that a few minutes' examination of the drugged man in his apartment would prove his identity and his own complicity with the real thief; consequently, his one desire was to get away as far as possible from his own abode. He gave a quick lurch, flinging O'Rafferty against the wall and making a mad dash, disappearing around the corner. But alas! 'for the best laid plans of mice and men'! As he made his break for liberty O'Rafferty's assistant, coming from the other direction, met him face to face, and instead of evading the law, ran into it.

Janie had managed to make her escape by way of the fire-escape before they reached the tenement, but a hasty survey of the place and an examination of the stupefied man on the bed told a story that all of Ladd's protestations could not refute; the result being that Ladd was taken away in custody, Adam Kent was partially revived and was taken home in a taxi by O'Rafferty. And in such a manner Le Moyne's well-laid scheme mislaid.

The sight of his father alive and apparently in normal health acted as a strong antidote to the poison which had befuddled Adam's senses. At first he was unable to grasp the reality of his sight, but when he learned it was really his father in flesh and blood before him—not a ghost of the man he fancied dead—he gave a choking cry and grasped Stephen Kent's hands in his own.

"Thank God, we'll learn the truth now!" he almost sobbed.

Though his exclamation was as so much Greek to his mother and sister, Stephen Kent did not seem surprised. His pallid face seemed to grow grayer, though he did not remove his hands, nor cease staring at his son.

O'Rafferty hesitated in the doorway, a benign smile on his long lean face, which seemed to irritate his fellow detective, for McCall burst forth:

"Say, our bird has flown; are you going to let him get away, even if he hasn't got the real jewels?"

Even as McCall spoke a shot rang out in the court-yard below, followed by an ominous silence. Mrs. Kent gave a little shriek; but O'Rafferty, paying no heed to her, pushed past and went out upon the fire-escape to peer into the snow-covered space below. The pale moonlight falling upon the court-yard lighted it as though it were a frosted incandescent and illuminated the tall, slim figure lying prone upon the ground and the two bluecoats beside him. As O'Rafferty stepped back into the room he said quietly:

"Diamond Joe's wings are clipped; I don't think he'll bother you again!"

"Have they killed him?" asked Phyllis in an awed voice.

Something made the detective hesitate. Again that intuition of his began to work—the real meaning of the strange resemblance between the two men (law-breaker and law-maker) burst upon him. Scraps of information concerning the crook flashed across his brain—bits of knowledge gained here and there—about his childhood, the notorious but beautiful woman he had called "mother," the gentleman who had married her and then repudiated her—"gad!" he muttered under his breath; "the old guy is Joe's father"—but aloud he said:

"I don't know. Come, McCall; we'll see."

Even though Phyllis would never know of her relationship to the thief, he could not come forth brutally and say he had been killed in making his escape.

After the detectives left them, Adam begged that his mother and Phyllis would return to their rooms and leave him alone with his father. The request sounded strangely, coming from a man who by all rights should be in bed recovering from the effects of the drug he had taken. His father was in no condition for a long conversation—Phyllis said as much, but when Stephen Kent likewise requested her to go, she grudgingly consented to do so.

"Come, Jaine," she said, infinitely contrite over her former attitude toward the girl. But Janie drew away, the hurt look in her eyes showing how deeply she had felt Phyllis' suspicions of her.

"Janie will stay with us," said Adam quietly. He placed a protecting arm about her, drawing her close to him.

Phyllis flushed painfully, while hot tears filled her eyes.

"I'm sorry," she whispered—"terribly, terribly sorry. I know you can never forgive me, Janie!"

A grimy little paw, scratched and dust-covered from contact with fire-escapes, ropes and brick walls, was thrust toward her, and for an instant Janie's sweet red mouth was pressed against her quivering one in a kiss of forgiveness; then Phyllis followed her mother from the room.

A long silence followed their exit, broken only by their labored breathing. Stephen Kent moved uneasily, while the man and girl watched him in a fascinated, breathless manner.

He seemed to have grown ages old and broken—a man who had made a losing fight. The arm Adam had placed about Janie tightened until she gave a little moan of pain, and he loosened his hold silently.

"Well, dad?" he finally said with set lips.

"What do you want to know?" asked Stephen Kent. He strove to speak naturally, but his voice trembled.

"The truth!"

"About what?"

"About Janie and me!" Adam moved a little closer toward his father, and the old man's glance fell.

"I—I don't understand," he muttered.

"You do! I want to marry her—is there any reason why I shouldn't?" Adam's voice was hard as steel, his eyes cold, merciless. Stephen Kent started to his feet with a cry, then dropped back again.

"Why do you ask me that?" he said in a choked voice, as though it were hard for him to speak.

"Because Lem Ladd, her stepfather, says you are Janie's father!"

"Lemm Ladd is a damned liar!" Kent burst forth with sudden strength.

Janie gave a little wail as the feeling of wonderful relief swept over her—she seemed to lose her balance and clung to Adam's arm for support; but Adam's next words robbed her of some of her assurance.

"Then, why did you pay him a thousand dollars to marry her mother—why do you still pay him hush-money, and why did you send Janie away?"

For answer Kent dropped his head in his shaking hands, and a muffled sob of agony burst from him.

"Dad!" Adam exclaimed; dad! for God's sake, tell me the truth! Can't you see what it means to us! No matter what you've done, it will made no difference if you'll tell me the real truth. Is Janie my sister?"

"No—I told you, no!"

"Who am I, then?" cried the girl. "You know! Please —please, tell me!"

Stephen Kent looked from one to the other like a haunted animal at bay, he ran his tongue over his white lips and strove to gain his composure.

"After all these years," he whispered softly—after all these years—your mother—Adam——"

"She'll never know," his son said reassuringly.

"She," he pointed to Janie, "her mother was"—he hesitated—"I had a cousin—a man I loved—we were like brothers in boyhood; he was cleverer than I, and while I remained a poor man he amassed a fortune. He had an idea that women cared only for his money, and determined when he married to be married for himself alone, with the result that while upon a fishing-trip he met her mother—Janie's mother I mean—a pretty, winsome country girl, who learned to love him, thinking his name Smith or Jones or something similar, and that he was a poor man. They were married, the girl still in ignorance of her husband's real name and position. Immediately after the marriage, John, my cousin, came to the city to settle some business; there he met and told me what he had done. I was furious, as I felt he had made a fool of himself over a pretty face and robbed me of a fortune. I was his only relative and many years younger, though married and for several years a father—I was to be his heir. This wife changed everything. However, I hid my chagrin to the best of my ability and congratulated him on his marriage. Imagine my dismay an hour later after he had left when I was called to the telephone and informed that he had been fatally injured by a passing street car. They had taken him to the hospital, but he was dying when I reached him. His only and last request was that I go at once to his wife and see that she was cared for.

"In my grief at his condition, I honestly intended to do as he requested; but after the funeral (and he was buried as a bachelor—no one knowing of his marriage) I began postponing and postponing my errand. And in those days the plan which I adopted germinated."

He hesitated as though it were too much of a struggle to continue his narrative, but Adam's impatient clearing of the throat offered little sympathy; so, with a little shrug of the shoulders, reminiscent of the old Kent, he continued:

"I've no excuse to offer for my conduct, except a desire for wealth and a position for my family—better and stronger men than I have fallen before such a temptation, and mine was a sin of omission rather than of commission. The fortune which by right should have been mine was mine for the taking. I simply reached out and took it. Needless to say, I did not anticipate this day. They say 'The mills of the gods grind slowly'—that you two should come face to face and fling my sin at my feet seems to have been a foregone conclusion. As John Kent's only heir—there were no papers among his possessions to prove there were any others—I stepped from comparative obscurity into affluence, my wife became a social favorite, my children, whom I worshiped, were educated befitting their position. After several months I hunted up the girl John Kent had married under an assumed name, mind you; found her in poverty, bewildered, broken-hearted by her desertion, at loss to understand the cause of such treatment. Likewise, she was about to become a mother. I gave her money and fetched her to New York, as already her friends and relatives in the small town where she lived were beginning to cast aspersions at her. Once in New York I informed her of John's death; also that though she fancied herself married to him the ceremony had not been genuine, as my cousin had a wife living!"

Janie gave a cry of protest—Adam made a move for her to be silent, though a look of unutterable disgust crept about his firm mouth. Stephen Kent, however, paid no heed to either. He seemed to be carried back to the years gone by and to be listening to the sound of his own voice, as he continued:

"Of course, she believed me, and made no attempt to prove the truth of my story. She seemed utterly crushed and only the thought of her coming child kept her from doing away with herself. Partially to protect her and partially to make myself secure in case anything ever

came to light I brought about her marriage to Lem Ladd. I fancied thus to put her out of my life, settled quite a sum on her and gave him a thousand dollars in cash. In a measure my hands were washed of her, for I never saw her again, though Ladd made my life a hell with his continual demands for money. Not until the girl appeared here that night did I know positively of her birth. Her resemblance to my dead cousin startled me, and gave me a bad turn—likewise the appearance of the brute her mother had married. Unforeseen circumstances flung you two together and destroyed all the barracks I built years ago——" His voice died to a whisper, and though he continued muttering to himself, what he said was unintelligible.

Adam advanced toward him, calm, uncompromising. The expression on his face would have made a lesser man quail, but Kent never moved. With his strange, distorted ideas of right and wrong, no doubt he found some justification for what he had done.

"Then everything we possess belongs by right to Janie?" Adam said quietly.

"In a measure, yes," said Kent; "but—well—you would know the truth though it made a beggar of you."

"You scoundrel!" said his son.

"Don't! Don't!" cried Janie. She had been sobbing quietly during the history of her mother's wrongs. Now she seemed to suddenly realize the enormity of what the man before her had done. In her gray-green eyes blazed the fury of outraged womanhood, her face seemed to glow as a reflection of the inward fire; and as she stepped toward Kent her hands clenched and unclenched with her controlled feeling, the tumult seething within her. Then, as she looked down upon the pitifully frail figure of the man who had so wronged her, as she saw death unquestionably stamped on the pinched features before her, she suddenly relented. With a sob she flung her arms about Adam.

"What does it matter?" she whispered, her head buried in the folds of his coat. "It is over now—mother is dead. Nothing we can do will bring her back. I don't need the money now. We have each other! What's mine is yours—and nobody will ever know." Though her words ran together incoherently, Adam understood.

Stephen Kent staggered to his feet with a muttered apology.

"It's late—I'm going back to bed—settle the thing between yourselves. I'm done for anyway. I'd—I'd rather your mother didn't know, Adam; she believes in me"—for an instant only his voice broke, then he was his *debonair* self again as he said good-night.

As the door closed behind him, Adam took down the receiver from the telephone, then immediately hung it up with a wry face when Janie said, "The wires are cut—what are you going to do?"

"Telephone the preacher to be ready for us, that we are coming anyway, no matter how late it is!"

Janie smiled, and the tears vanished like an April shower. "Never mind phoning," she said; "we'll wake him up when we get there."

It was when they were in a taxicab, returning home after the ceremony was over, that Adam suddenly realized what he had done.

"Good heavens, Janie!" he gasped; "do you know you've married a poor man and I've married an heiress?"

"Well, that isn't my fault, is it?" she said. "You can't prove it anyway, if I say you're a story-teller!"

An intensely interesting story will be issued in our next number, entitled "Marse Chet's Duel." It was written by George F. Lyon, a well-known author of Southern romances.

SPECIAL NOTICE

Please give your newsdealer a standing order for your semi-monthly copy of "MYSTERY MAGAZINE." The War Industries Board has asked all publishers to save waste. Newsdealers must, therefore, be informed if you intend to get a copy of this magazine every two weeks, so they will know how many copies to order from us.

TAKE NOTICE!

The feature stories that have been published in this magazine are well worth reading, if you have not already seen them. The list is as follows:

No.
1 THE EEL MAN, by Robert Carlton Brown
2 ZITANA OF MAISON ROUGE, by F. W. Doughty
3 THE MYSTERIOUS WEB, by Armstrong Perry
4 UNDER THE HYPNOTIC SPELL, by Dr. H. Enton
5 THE SILKEN SHEATH, by Crittenden Marriott
6 A FORTUNE TELLER'S SECRET, by Gladys Hall
7 THE MYSTIC EMBLEM, by Marie Coolidge Rask
8 THE CARDS OF FATE, by William Goode
9 MR. BACHELLER'S APARTMENTS, By William Hamilton Osborne
10 THE INNER WHEEL, by Octavius Roy Cohen
11 THE VOICE OF THE VALLEY, by Robt. C. Brown
12 THE SIGN OF THE SEVEN SHARKS, By Charles F. Oursler
13 UNDER A MASK, by Critenden Marriott
14 CASE 4,444, by Gladys Hall
15 AFTER A MILLION, by Police Captain Howard
16 SHADOWING THE BLUE TRIANGLE, By Charles F. Oursler
17 THE CASE OF CAPTAIN FORTESQUE, By Redfield Ingalls
18 THE BIRD-HEADED SPHINX, by Edith S. Tupper
19 A DOUBLE MYSTERY, by Dr. Harry Enton
20 THE MAGICIAN DETECTIVE, by C. F. Oursler
21 KING COBRA MYSTERY, by George Gilbert
22 THE HAUNTED CORRIDORS, by Wm. H. Osborne
23 NO MAN'S MAN, by Maxwell Smith
24 THE TREVOR PUZZLE, by T. C. Harbaugh.
25 THE TRAIL OF ROSES, by Edmund Condon.
26 THE HINDOO VANISHING CLUE, By Pauline Carrington Bouve
27 WHO WAS GUILTY? by Beulah Poynter
28 THE EVIL EYE, by Chas. F. Oursler
29 THE THIRTEENTH DOOR, by Edith Sessions Tupper
30 THE GAME OF DETECTIVE CAREW, By Leonard Jerome

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FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher, 168 West 23d St., New York.

THE BRAND OF JEALOUSY

By A. WORTHINGTON VAIL

THE spring found me in New Orleans, whither I had gone in quest of a party who had succeeded in passing several forged checks of liberal amounts on one of the leading New York banks.

With my usual good luck, I succeeded in chasing my game to cover, and, after placing him beyond the power of doing further harm, gave myself a little relaxation by visiting some old friends in New Orleans.

The first call I made was on a wealthy French cotton broker named Decatur. I had met him in New York while there on matters connected with his business, and now being in his city I determined to accept the urgent invitation he had given to pay him a visit.

When I was ushered into Mr. Decatur's parlor, I found him in a state of great depression. He greeted me cordially, however, exclaiming, as he did so:

"How fortunate that you should happen in on me just now. You're the very man I want to see."

"Why, Mr. Decatur," I replied, "what makes you particularly glad to see me just at this time? Has anything gone wrong?" I continued.

"Yes, indeed," he replied mournfully. "Be seated, and I will tell you."

I complied with his request, and he then drew his chair up alongside of mine and told me the following story:

"A week ago," he began, "my daughter Isabella told me that she desired to go up the Mississippi River about a hundred miles, to a place called Holliston, on a visit to some friends. Being my only child, I have always indulged her in every wish, and in this one, as usual, I gave my consent. I had some forebodings about letting her go alone, as the river is, as you know, swollen very high, and accidents are more common at this season of the year than at any other time. But she was so anxious and so confident in her ability to travel safely alone, that I finally gave my consent.

"It appears that she arrived at her destination safely; but now comes the mysterious part of the affair, which has thrown me into a state of great worry and anxiety. Last night I received a letter from Mr. Martinique, the gentleman whose guest she was, in which he says that the second night after her arrival she retired to her bed at about eleven o'clock at night, and that when morning came she was missing from the house, and that he has not seen her since, and that he fears she has met with foul play."

As the father read this dread supposition he gave vent to his feelings in a burst of tears. When he had ca'med himself, I asked:

"Are you sure that your daughter has not returned to New Orleans? Perhaps," I continued, "she may have got homesick and came back sooner than she contemplated, and may have gone to the house of some one of her friends here in the city."

"Oh, no," he answered excitedly, "she would not do that. She thinks too much of her own home to stay away from it if she were here. Besides, I have made diligent inquiry among all her friends to-day, and not one of them has seen her. I fear," he went on, his voice trembling with emotion, "that she has met with foul play in some shape. She was a beautiful girl, and I did wrong to trust her away from me alone. There are some hard characters up the Mississippi River, and she may have met her death at the hands of some of them."

"I would not take so gloomy a view of the matter as that, Mr. Decatur," I remarked consolingly.

"I can't help it, my friend," he returned. "I have had some dreadful premonitions regarding her ever since she left, and this letter convinces me that some of them have been realized." Say what I could, nothing quieted his fears. He was obdurate in his belief that some great wrong had befallen his handsome daughter.

"There's no use in theories," he remarked. "Isabel has met with hard luck, and I want you to go up the river to-morrow and ferret it out."

Seeing that he was firm in his belief and that nothing could shake him, I consented, although I had no idea that anything would result from my journey.

I reasoned that perhaps Miss Isabel had formed an attachment for some one of Holliston's young men, and that her visit to that place was for the purpose of seeing him, and that when they met she had adopted that expedient for outwitting stern fathers quite common to Southern ladies, of eloping with the man of her heart.

I did not mention this romantic theory to Mr. Decatur, but on the following day, armed with a letter of introduction to Mr. Martinique, I started for Holliston.

The river, at the time I set out on my journey, had already risen far beyond its usual watermark, and its turbulent current was being rapidly increased by the thousand-and-one little streams, swollen by the melting snow, that emptied into the mighty waterway.

"There'll be a great smashing of some of the levees along the shore to-night, if this thing keeps up," remarked the captain of the steamer to one of his men.

What added force to his prophecy was the fact that, when within a few miles of Holliston, rain began to fall in a perfect deluge.

We arrived at Holliston about six o'clock in the evening. I found it to be a little way-station of slight importance, except as a place where steamers stopped to load up with a supply of fuel sufficient to carry them to St. Louis, their journey's end.

The village proper lay in a hollow tract of country about a hundred yards from the wooding wharf.

As I walked back from the pier, after landing, and looked down upon the quiet little village nestling beneath, it occurred to my mind as a very precarious place to pass the night in view of the threatening manner in which the river was rising.

But, seeing that a very strongly-built levee protected the water front, I did not give this thought a second consideration, but resolved to go down to the village and take chances with the rest of its inhabitants.

My first stopping-place was at the Bolton House, the only hotel that the place boasted.

After a social chat with some of the loungers about the place and a good supper, seeing that the evening was

pretty well advanced, I resolved to walk up to Mr. Martinique's place and spend the evening there, relying upon Mr. Decatur's letter of introduction for a cordial reception.

A ring at the door-bell brought Martinique to the door, and, with a courteous, hospitable manner, he bade me come in.

I presented him with Mr. Decatur's letter, which he read, and then welcomed me into his parlor and bade me "make myself at home."

When I was seated, Martinique said:

"I suppose Mr. Decatur is very much worried about Isabel, is he not?"

"Yes; very much so," I replied laconically.

"And no wonder," he returned. "It's the strangest thing I ever heard of. She seemed as happy here as a bird, and why she should go away so suddenly and so unceremoniously is a mystery which I can't understand."

He had hardly finished speaking when a tall, stately lady entered the room, whom he introduced as his wife, adding casually that I was a friend of Mr. Decatur's, from New Orleans, and as such was entitled to their kindness and hopitality.

It may have been imagination, but subsequent developments proved it was not, that I fancied when Mr. Martinique mentioned to his wife that I was a friend of Mr. Decatur's that she became cool and distant in her manner, as if she considered that the fact of my being Mr. Decatur's friend was a poor passport to her kindness or hospitality.

Incidentally, during the course of the evening, Martinique referred anxiously to Isabel Decatur's whereabouts, saying that her disappearance had been a source of great worriment to him.

"Oh, bother—Isabel Decatur!" his wife replied, in a manner which plainly showed she was vexed. "What do you want to keep worrying about her for, Henri?"

"Haven't I a right to be worried?" Mr. Martinique asked humbly.

"No," exclaimed his wife, in a violent tone of voice. "You have no right to be worried about any young woman. I am your wife, and it is your duty to let every one else take care of themselves."

My knowledge of human nature was just comprehensive enough to see at once that Mrs. Martinique was of an exceedingly jealous disposition.

"True enough," replied the gentleman, calmly, to his wife's remark; "but, my dear," he continued, "you seem to forget that Isabel Decatur was our guest and in our care, and that, as such, we are partly responsible for her safety."

He had hardly finished speaking when a sound as of rushing waters fell upon our ears and caused us to listen in mute inquiry as to the cause.

"My heavens!" cried Mr. Martinique, springing to his feet and grasping a life-preserver, which he had obtained from one of the Mississippi steamers, "the river has burst over the levee, and will drown us all."

Fearing that his words would prove too true, I jumped to my feet and threw off my coat, resolving to be prepared for the emergency.

Outside could be heard the angry gurgling of the oncoming flood as it beat in its impetuous race against the sides of the house. Crash! crash! came the angry waves against the sides of the dwelling, as if angered at their failure to obtain admittance.

The windows of the old manor proved unavailing against the mighty element outside, for with one final crash the water came rushing with a mighty current through the room, upsetting chairs and every article of furniture in its impetuous torrent. Mrs. Martinique up to this time had sat quietly in her chair, despair pictured in her face. But when the water, in its mad rush across the room, raised a little trap-door in the floor, she sprang wildly from her chair, which went reeling over behind her, closed the trap-door and knelt down upon it. Thinking to calm her feelings of fear, I stepped forward and placed my arms about her shoulders.

"Did you see her? Did you see her?" she cried wildly, her face haggard with guilty fear. "Oh, my heavens! ever the elements conspire against me. Here, beneath where I kneel, is the body of Isabel Decatur. Did you see her?" she repeated, in terrified tones.

Mr. Martinique, with the life-preserver in his hands, ready to spring out of the window, stopped when he heard her horrible confession and stood looking at his wife and myself as if transfixed.

"Come, Martinique," I said, turning about and facing him, "our best plan of preservation is to go into the upper stories of the house, and wait there until the flood subsides."

He readily acquiesced in my suggestion and led the way to the upper story.

We remained there two days, making the best of our precarious circumstances, and then the flood subsided sufficiently to allow us to go below.

On raising the trap-door leading to the cellar beneath the sitting-room, the statement of Mrs. Martinique was found to be true.

There, covered with the slime that the mad waters had left, lay the body of Isabella Decatur.

When this discovery was made and the evidence of Mrs. Martinique's guilt was complete, I informed her I was an officer of the law, and to consider herself my prisoner.

In company with her I started for New Orleans on the following day, where I lodged her in jail to await trial.

This duty over, I waited on Mr. Decatur, and informed him, in as delicate a manner as possible, of the sad results of my journey. Before Mrs. Martinique's trial was called up, under advice of her lawyer, she made the following confession, in the hope that by doing so her punishment would be mitigated:

"During my courtship with my husband, Isabel Decatur was my most formidable rival; and had it not been for her father's opposition to his suit, he would, no doubt, have married her. With this obstacle in his way, I became his wife. But from the start I could see that his affections were for another. He was continually cursing the fate which lost him Isabel Decatur. I loved him devotedly, and such talk was gall and wormwood to me. I grew to hate Isabel Decatur with all the intensity of my nature, and looked upon her as a viper in the path of my happiness. My husband's constant allusions to her stirred up all the devil in my nature. The thought that I was the wife of a man whose love was another's was madness to me.

"Isabel Decatur came to my house on a visit, and while there I fancied that she was trying to estrange Mr. Martinique from me. My husband was away from home one night, being engaged in overseeing the loading of a steamer at the wharf. At midnight I arose and attacked Isabel Decatur as she lay sleeping in the bed in my sitting-room. Then I placed her body through the trap-door into the cellar beneath. The crime haunted me day and night. I fancied that everybody looked upon me as a murderess, and when the flood of waters came rushing through the room and raised the trap-door, I was sure that the gentleman present saw her body. Jealousy has been my curse."

This confession, while it may have saved her from the electric chair, did not save her from a life sentence in State prison.

EGGS IS EGGS

By JOHN P. ROBINSON

OF all the funny birds I ever saw or wrote about, the mud turtle surely is the oddest thing that was ever hatched from a shell.

Some people who read this will object to his relation to the birds, claiming that he has no wings; but I hold that the "turkle" is as near being a bird as the penguin and is in the rudimentary bird class, which entitles him, or her, to consideration in these days of high-priced eggs.

For, if "pigs is pigs," eggs is eggs; and when eggs get to soaring to sixty-nine cents a dozen, no come-backs for tainted ones bought with perfectly clean money, it's time something was done to Hooverize matters, and, if not practicable to adjust the ordinary hen to hit on more than four cylinders at once out of a possible six, we should endeavor to find a substitute for her product. For, at sixty-nine cents a dozen, even an honest hen would admit that it's a shame to take the money.

So, upon looking over the field for a possible future egg supply, I am strongly inclined to recommend the turtle. Some folks will object that turtles' eggs are too strong; but those who know tell me that they taste something *like ham and eggs*, which is a clear saving of the price of the ham—and smoked ham is darned steep these days, too. I can't figure out how this is, for there has been a greater smoke production the last four years than ever before.

While the domestic fowl is barely inclined to give down one whole egg a day the year around, the turkle, when her maternal instincts get the better of her judgment, goes the limit. I am informed that she will dig a hole in the sand and lay therein no less than 131 eggs at a sitting, or a setting, whichever you prefer. Does she then calmly sit on them and wait a long three weeks for them to hatch? Does the father turtle, like the daddy ostrich, take turns and help her out for an hour or so, that she may run down street and hear the latest gossip? Not so; neither one of them give a darn. They just cover those eggs up with sea-weed and sand and let Nature and the solar rays do the rest. They don't worry a hang about results. Father won't, mother won't, so the sun hatches them out.

Now, 131 eggs are just one short of being eleven dozen, and, at sixty-nine cents a dozen, come to exactly $7.59—what you might call a good-sized nest-egg. Not a sum to be sneezed at, to say nothing about plenty of eggs. Of course, if the market should suddenly find itself up against such an enormous egg yield, hen eggs might fall off a point or two. But the brisk European demand might preclude even this, and we may safely say that if a fellow could find a turtle's nest and come home once a day with a hatful of eggs it would be just as good as having a job in the shipyard.

Seven dollars and fifty-nine cents! It would be just like finding an egg mine!

The turtle is found almost everywhere—that I have been. Up North he does not grow large, but down here in the sunny South he frequently attains enormous size, so that if you put him in a barrel he would have to be slid in edgeways, for he couldn't sit down in a common barrel.

In designing the turtle, Nature seems to have been half serious and half in joking mood. First, she started to produce an animal that could carry his house on his head, and upon hearing the fire alarm or any other danger signal he could go inside, shut and barricade all the doors as securely as in any house in the Spanish-American tropics. He is also Nature's own design for a perfect submarine, and anyone wishing to make a U-boat for home use would do well to observe the turkle and size up the perfection of his air-chambers, his water-tight doors, and his entire submersible apparatus.

Having gone the limit on utility, Nature seems to have changed her mind and finished off the gopher jokingly, for he is the funniest, clumsiest animal that ever waddled on four feet.

Watch him as he comes out of his shell, some time. He is inside and the house is all dark. The windows closed, shutters down and the lights out. Bimeby the turkle thinks he will wake up and see what's doing on the outside. He listens a while to assure himself there are no submarine chasers about to drop a depth bomb, opens a window a little way and shoves out his periscope. Next his head comes out, then a flipper, one by one till they are all out. What looked like a big round rock has turned into an animated something that looks and waddles like a small "tank." At last he is all out that is coming out, and with a glad wag of his tail he sits down, swallows a lot of sunshine and sings "Hail, Smiling Morn." He is glad he is living. The apparent mineral has become the animal.

Just as the toad is near-cousin to the frog and looks like him, so, also, is the turtle step-twin to the tortoise, who lives near the seashore all year around, has web feet like a duck, and grows as large as the cover of a hogshead. The tortoise, too, is as full of meat as an oyster. He is a native of the tropics, but often lists to the lure of the sea and emigrates to New York, where he soon meets his finish. He puts up at a first-class hotel and ends his days there.

When it is a lady turkle, it is a sad finish to a promising career. Born in the tropics, with nothing to worry her, able to spend most of the time basking in the sunshine on a reef, nothing harder to do than enter an egg-laying contest with a lot of other turtle girls to see who can lay the most eggs on a sunny reef in the tropics, I say, far from the madding crowds' ignoble strife, she yet yearns for the Great White Way, the lobster palace and the Greenwhich Willage, as a Hebrew once called it. Fond of languor and laziness, one day she answers to the call of the wild and next she is in a parlor car on ice, going north, or else in the refrigerator cabin of a Clyde liner—with no more chance to come back than the Kaiser.

She has wallowed in the sand for her last wallow, dug her last nest. If the mother turkle has laid, say, four nests full, she must leave 524 posthumous children who will never see her face and never nurse at her breast, nor ever crawl under her flippers when she tries to "cluck" them home nights. No more will she go to roost on a coral

reef, with 524 little turkles roosting alongside of her. The die has been cast, the Rubicon crossed. She has gone the way of many a wayward girl. She will fill the flowing bowl, go to sleep in a strange hotel and wake up and wish she was back home, while, way down South, mayhap the father turkle will sit down with his broad back against a piece of wreckage and ponder why women are never content with purely domestic duties.

There is a great moral in all this, my friends. We should early learn that the rolling stone gathers no moss; though able philosophers avow that a rolling stone gathers polish, so it is with the turtle. Down in the sandy bottoms she was an unpolished diamond (back), until Gotham gathered her in.

An erstwhile humorist once, upon being invited to a New York post, said that the metropolis is like a boy with an orange. It lures the brilliant mind to the Big City, finds out all he knows, and then, like the orange the boy has sucked dry, casts aside what's left, unconcernedly.

So it is with the she-turtle who ventures into Babylon. Her insides are scooped out and made into soup, maybe to feed a bawdy, maudlin crowd. Next morning the cook sells the old shell to the junk man for about the same price he pays for old automobile tires that cost sixty dollars apiece new—three cents a pound.

The tortoise of the Caribbean Sea is no more as such. What is left of her is cut up into small pieces and made into handles for paper knives, razors, side-combs, *et cet.* The mother of 524 children, all twins, is scattered into 524 places.

Moral: There's no place like Home—if you've got one. I hain't. That's why there's crocodile tears on this turkle manuscript.

Watch for the rousing detective sketch in No. 32, called "Tracking a Bigamist." The author is Frank Van Trenk, and the story is splendid.

STRANGE FREAKS OF BULLETS

AT the battle of Peach Orchard, Va., when McClellan was making his change of base, a Michigan infantryman fell to the ground as if shot dead, and was left lying in a heap as the regiment changed position. The bullet that had hit him first struck the barrel of his gun, then glanced and struck off a button of his coat, tore the watch out of his vest-pocket and struck the man just over the heart, where it was stopped by a song-book in his shirt-pocket. He was unconscious for three-quarters of an hour, and it was a full month before the black-and-blue spot disappeared.

At Pittsburg Landing a member of the Twelfth Michigan Infantry stopped to give a wounded man a drink from his canteen. While in this act a bullet aimed at his breast struck the canteen and buried itself in the leg of a horse. The canteen was split open and dropped to the ground in halves. At the second battle of Bull Run a New York infantryman was passing tobacco to a comrade when a bullet struck the plug, glanced off and buried itself in a knapsack. The tobacco was rolled up like a ball of shavings and carried a hundred feet away. Directly in the line of the bullet was the head of a lieutenant and, had not the bullet been deflected, he would certainly have been wounded or killed thereby. As it was, he had both eyes filled with tobacco-dust and had to be led to the rear.

At Brandon Station one of Custer's troopers had his left stirrup-strap cut away by a grape-shot, which passed between his leg and the horse, blistering the skin as if a red-hot iron had been used. He dismounted to ascertain the extent of his injuries and, as he bent over, a bullet knocked his hat off and killed his horse. In the same fight was a trooper who had suffered several days with a toothache. In a hand-to-hand conflict he received a pistol-ball in the right cheek. It knocked out his aching tooth and passed out through the left corner of his mouth, taking along a part of an upper tooth. The joy of getting rid of the toothache was so great that the trooper could not be made to go to the rear to have his wound dressed.

TEMPLE OF GODS IN UTAH FOREST

ACCORDING to the *Scientific American*, one of the most remarkable formations to be found in our wonderful southwestern country is the little known Temple of Gods in Southern Utah. Distant from any railway and off the main traveled roads, it has long remained hidden in the Sevier National Forest.

We could learn of no one who knew the way save the foresters, and we found it wholly unmarked, but eventually this interesting region will be often visited, for it combines a wealth of color with the most unusual forms.

Here are great hillsides composed of limestone, clay and gravel which have been erected into fantastic towers twenty-five to four hundred feet in height, some of them isolated and others linked together in companies. So symmetrical are these ribbed and fluted pillars that they seem almost to have been turned with a lathe, and they often resemble kiosks or taper to minarets.

But it is not merely this unique sculpturing that attracts and holds the attention, but especially is it their unusual coloring, for the temples are banded with red and salmon and yellow that is mixed with pink, while many of the spires are tipped with white. In the morning light the whole scene is bathed in orange and yellow; at noon it is flushed with rosy pink, while at evening from the canyon depths the temples glow with opalescent hues.

Two great hillsides have been eroded, separated by a ridge so low that the whole might be considered as one gigantic amphitheatre, and, in fact, it is collectively known as Bryce canyon.

Looking across the largest or southern amphitheatre toward the distant hillside we see, as it were, a vast city of prehistoric ruins; while from the topmost bastion of the surrounding cliffs we look down upon the stage setting of a fairy opera.

Again we see a forest of pinnacles and tiny fingers, ghostly white, rising from the depths of the canyon like stalagmites. Far below is a labyrinth of narrow interlacing canyons leading to slopes dotted with pines and spruces whose green contrasts effectively with the orange red of the canyon floor. Beyond are colored ridges and buttes that lead to the distant valley and the town of Tropic.

A MOTIVELESS CRIME

By HERBERT TRIMER

THE ways of criminals, as every detective knows, are as mysterious as the ways of Providence, but every detective knows equally as well that, unlike the ways of Providence, they are not always past finding out.

In my experience as a detective, I have always found that behind every crime was a motive, either special, pecuniary, or revengeful, and that when once that motive was discovered, the finding of the criminal was an easy matter.

However, the old saying that there is an exception to every rule holds good in the present case, as the following story which I am about to relate will amply show.

When I was a young man and, as the term goes, "green" in my profession, I first met with a case which, to all intents and purposes, had no motive behind it.

It was a piece of presumption on my part to undertake to solve it, and my only reason for doing so was the fact that a number of experienced detectives had worked on it and had been obliged to give it up, confessing that its intricacies baffled all their powers of detection.

Living with me in the small village of Templeton, Ohio, where I first began my career, was a wealthy family named Forrest.

My acquaintance with Mr. Forrest was made shortly after the announcement of the sudden death of his wife, a lady widely known and esteemed all over that section of country.

Her death, which occurred very suddenly, and under peculiar circumstances, created a great deal of gossip and gave rise to many conjectures which reflected very seriously on her husband's character.

So pointed were some of the opinions regarding the cause of her death that Mr. Forrest was obliged for his own vindication to institute an investigation, which he did by employing a couple of well-known detectives from Chicago, who, after a short time on the case, gave it up, assuring Mr. Forrest that they believed all suspicions of foul play were groundless. Mr. Forrest was forced to be content with their conclusions, his own conscience being clear of any guilt in connection with the matter.

Hardly had the excitement concerning his wife's death subsided in the village, when the tongues of the gossips were again set a-wagging by the intelligence that his eldest daughter, a lovely young lady of about eighteen years, had been suddenly taken ill with the same symptoms as her mother, and, like her, had passed as quickly away.

Her funeral was hardly over when a son of Mr. Forrest was stricken down in the same way, and succumbed as quickly to the mysterious illness as had his mother and sister.

Matters were in this state when Mr. Forrest called at my office and asked me to clear up the mystery.

The closest questioning on my part failed to elicit anything which would lead me to suspect that Mr. Forrest was otherwise than truthful in his assertion that he knew absolutely nothing about the causes which had stricken the three members of his family.

"Why," he assured me, with tears in his eyes, "there wasn't a happier family in Templeton than mine. I loved my wife and two dear children as fondly as it is possible for a man to love, and the remarks that have been passed that I caused their deaths are heartless and cruel. Great heavens!" he exclaimed, as the tears coursed down his bronzed cheeks, "to think that I should be accused of such a foul crime. Why, sir, it's monstrous!"

"Of course," I said, as he became a little calmer. "You have some theory as to the cause of their death, have you not?"

"Yes," he answered; "but it is so slight that I attach no importance to it, and my own conscience chides me for entertaining such an idea."

"Tell me," I said, "what are your ideas of the matter? Surely," I went on, "nobody understands your family affairs as well as you do, and your suspicions should be as near correct as anybody's."

"Well, to tell you the truth," he answered, "I don't like to tell you upon whom my suspicions rest, for in so doing I may be wronging a person for whom I have always had the greatest respect."

Assuring him that all confidence reposed in me would be as inviolable as the grave, he at length decided to tell me his suspicions.

"I have had," he said, "in my employ for the past six years a governess, the daughter of a dead brother of whom I was very fond. She has always been looked upon as one of the family, not as a menial; of late she has appeared sullen and morose, and occasionally a little eccentric. Now," he continued, "I have thought it just possible that she may have had something to do with the deaths of the members of my family, that she may have poisoned them."

"What motive do you imagine she could have for so doing?" I asked.

"That's what baffles me," he answered. "I can't for the life of me devise any reason to account for her crimes, if she is guilty. She has always professed the greatest love for my wife and children, and they the same for her, and why she should want to do them an injury is more than I can divine."

"But she is undoubtedly the criminal all the same," I replied, with professional intuition.

"Do you think so?" he asked eagerly; "and why?"

I replied that I could give no substantial reason for my opinion, but assured him that if he would give me the liberty of his home for a few days I would undoubtedly prove the truth of my belief.

"I hate—God knows I do," he replied, "to think that Fanny would be guilty of such a foul wrong; yet, if proved that she is, I would want to see her punished as severely as the next one. And yet," he went on, "I can't believe that she is guilty. She has always been so kind, so gentle, and so loving, that it doesn't seem possible that she could be transformed into such a fiend, and for no reason at all. No, sir," he added with energy, "I don't believe she is the guilty person."

"Well," I replied, "with all due deference to your feelings, Mr. Forrest, I do; and, as I said before, if you will allow me the liberty of your house for a few days, I think

I will prove myself right in this matter. You must bear in mind that your own character is at stake in this affair, that some very hard things have been said against you, and that your own character should be vindicated, no matter who else is compromised."

This reference to his own position awakened him to the necessity for some action, even though his niece was injured by it.

"Well, then," he said, "I want you to go to work on this mystery at once and clear it up. If Fanny is guilty, the sooner she is found out and put out of the way the better."

It was arranged that on the following day I should present myself at his house as a friend from the East, come to pay Mr. Forrest a week's visit, and that as such he would give me ample opportunity to prosecute my investigation.

In accordance with this arrangement the next day found me at Mr. Forrest's door, valise in hand, as if just off a long journey.

Forrest received me cordially, and, bringing me in, introduced me to his niece, Miss Fanny Wentworth, whom I found to be a very modest and withal exceedingly prepossessing young lady. She was so mild-mannered and refined in her demeanor that for the moment I was inclined to share the opinion with her uncle that she was incapable of the crimes which I had suspected.

When in the course of my conversation with her I referred to the sad bereavements Mr. Forrest had recently undergone, she appeared deeply affected and expressed her sorrow in the most pathetic manner.

However, these manifestations of grief had no effect on me in altering my belief as to her guilt, for I had learned how true was the saying that "appearances are very deceptive," and accordingly did not relax for one moment my watch upon all her actions while in the house.

She went about in the discharge of her duties as cheerily as if the shadow of death had not so recently fallen, and in every way comported herself like one who was incapable of doing a wrong action.

On the second day of my stay in the Forrest mansion I noticed that she appeared less vivacious in her manner than was her wont. She seemed gloomy and depressed in spirits, and anxious to avoid conversation with her uncle or myself.

"She's got one of her fits on now," said the latter to me as he was showing me to my bedroom on the night of the day in question.

I bade him good-night and sat down in the room to meditate.

"So far," I thought, "I have discovered nothing which warrants me in believing Fanny Wentworth guilty of any crime."

I sat there for a long time, pondering over the mysterious affair, and was at last aroused from my reflections by hearing Mr. Forrest at the foot of the stairs which led down from my room to the sitting-room bidding Fanny "good-night," with the remark that she had better not stay up much longer, as it was already twelve o'clock.

I waited until I heard Forrest enter his room—next to mine—and retire, and then stole quietly out of my room down the stairs, with the faint hope that I might discover Fanny Wentworth in some action that would justify my belief in her guilt.

I had almost reached the bottom of the stairs when my attention was arrested by a voice as if earnestly engaged in prayer or some sort of devotion.

Unwilling to rudely disturb the one thus engaged, I stopped still and listened attentively.

I recognized the voice as that of Miss Wentworth.

By inclining my head forward beyond the partition which shut out the stairs from the sitting-room I could see that she was standing leaning on a stand before the window.

Her attitude was anything but devotional, and in inclining my head farther forward to see if I could catch something of what she was saying, I observed a piece of white paper on the stand before her, on which was a little pile of white powder. As I stood looking intently at this preparation, she gave one look at it, and then burst forth into the following sentence:

"Oh, thou mysterious power, I bless thee for the strength that thou givest to a poor, weak little woman like me. With thee I have humbled the haughty Mrs. Forrest, and brushed her daughter from my path, and with thy aid," and she looked at the mysterious powder rapturously, "I will send Mr. Forrest, strong and healthy as he is, to his last account."

My first impulse was to bound into the room and confront her with her guilt, but on a second thought I determined to wait until morning and see what would transpire then. I had heard enough to convince me that she meditated foul play, and I determined to balk her plans and at the same time to obtain proof of her guilt.

In a few moments she started back to the kitchen, and, taking advantage of her absence, I made my way back to my room. The following morning I awoke, and shortly afterward, in company with Mr. Forrest, sat down to breakfast.

Fanny presided at the table and appeared to be in excellent spirits.

She poured out for Mr. Forrest and myself each a cup of coffee. As the former raised the cup to his lips to drink I sprang to my feet and in the most peremptory manner forbade him to do so.

"And why not, pray?" he asked in astonishment.

"Because," I said, looking the Wentworth girl in the face, "that woman has put poison in it! And if you drink, like your wife and children, you die!"

As I finished speaking the girl sank back into her chair, the coffee-pot falling from her nerveless grasp to the floor.

"Is this true, Fanny?" Mr. Forrest asked seriously.

"It is, uncle," she replied, with trembling voice. "Have mercy on me!" she pleaded piteously. "God forgive me! I know not what I do!"

Mr. Forrest arose calmly from his chair and picked up the coffee-pot.

"Come, Mr. Primer," he said, addressing me; "I will take this down to Dr. Winters and have him analyze it. If he finds poison, that woman will be in prison before night."

In answer she only returned a scornful laugh, and defied him to do his worst.

Dr. Winters analyzed the contents of the coffee-pot and found arsenic in sufficient quantity to kill a regiment, and Mr. Forrest made his word good in having his niece at once arrested and lodged in jail.

When brought to trial she was pronounced insane by the court physicians.

In consideration of her insanity, on being found guilty of the murder of Mrs. Forrest and her two children, Fanny Wentworth was sent to an insane asylum for life.

And there she is up to the present time, shorn of all opportunity to invoke the fatal power by which she wrought so much unhappiness.

HOW JIM STAKED HIS "PARDNER"

By HON. GEO. R. MALBY

THE glare of the yellow lamp light shone through the smoke mist which filled the main room of Dutch Jake's Yellow Dog Hotel in the Copper Head Canyon, and save for an occasional deep-toned oath and the click, click of the bone chips, there was a surprising stillness in the den, for in all the canyon there had never before been played such a stiff game of poker. Scores of the "best" citizens were lookers-on at the manipulation of the cards by the five players.

It was a lively game, and the man who was caught bluffing lost the pot, and in such cases the pot was well worth the winning.

It was a table-stake game; and besides the piles of red, white and blue chips there were little heaps of brown buckskin bags, each of which contained about a hundred dollars' worth of gold-dust, strewn about the rough table.

No one was more exultant at the time than I was, for my "pardner" was in the game, and had for nearly an hour held most phenomenal hands, and won at least twelve thousand dollars. This was extremely satisfactory to me, for Jim and I had pooled our issues for the game and were to divide the profits or losses, as the case might be.

It wasn't everybody who cottoned to Jim. He was too quiet and wasn't much of a drinker; but if ever there was one, he was a poker fiend. As a poker player, Jim had the respect of the entire camps; for who could bluff with such nonchalant grace, as though he didn't care a rap whether he were called or not? Who ever lost with such a smiling calm, or such quiet good nature?

And so it happened that this match-game of poker had been arranged for the boys with a combination of sporting blood and gold-dust. The whole camp was interested, and many side-bets as to the winner of the freeze-out had been freely made. The odds, however, were on Jim.

The great game began about nine o'clock at night, and at four o'clock in the morning the shuffle, cut and deal was still going on; and while many of the spectators had gone to their cabins, there was still a dense ring of dark faces surrounding the players, upon which the dim light shone with an ever-changing radius of brightness and shadow, sometimes turning brown eyes red or blue eyes green.

"A Potter's Field ghoul couldn't have worse luck!" and Dandy Mack threw down a ten full with a terrible curse, which we all carefully noted in our minds for use the first time we had occasion to need a particularly strong expression of feeling, for Dandy really enjoyed the distinction of swearing the most original and soul-stirring oaths of any man at the mines.

Dandy was broke; didn't have a dollar left, and his friends probably couldn't have raised ten bits between 'em. When Dandy staggered out, with his white face looking all the more ghastly from the dull smoke-shrouded light, a general feeling that the end was approaching seemed to impress every one, and the ring of faces drew closer as the cards were shuffled for a new deal.

I was leaning on the high back of Jim's chair. To his left sat Kansas Pete, a raw-boned giant with a great black beard. Next to him was Dandy Mack's empty chair, and opposite to us sat Frenchy. I can see him now. A middle-sized man, smooth-shaven, with a square jaw, blue eyes and low forehead, which looked higher because of a partial baldness through a wisp of dun-colored hair, forming a little peninsula where a parting ought to be.

On our right sat a young fellow from the East, whom we called the "Scholar," because it was said he had been to a real college. It was his deal, and Jim anteed a blue chip (worth $25), and picked up his cards. I saw that he had three six-spots, and felt glad when Pete tossed in two blues, and was still sanguine when Frenchy made it $100 to play. All the rest stayed.

When cards were drawn, I noticed that Jim had not bettered, and Frenchy won on a pat flush, and that was the beginning of that fiend's luck, and of the end of the game.

I will say this for Frenchy—he was a game player, but a mean man, though maybe I am prejudiced.

Well, Jim dealt, and Frenchy won nearly $2,600—most of it from Jim—and I groaned aloud as that man raked in the pile of chips and gold-dust.

"I reckon yer got a streak, Frenchy," was all that Jim said as he cut the cards for Pete's deal.

Jim picked up his five cards, and I could have shouted for joy, as one after the other he skinned down four aces and a six-specker of diamonds—never-to-be-forgotten cards.

Frenchy had made the ante fifty dollars, call a hundred, and the Scholar came in.

"Two hundred," remarked Jim.

Kansas Pete dropped.

"Five hundred," said Frenchy, after peering at his cards a minute—the Scholar quit.

"One thousand," announced Jim, shoving in a number of brown bags.

"Two thousand," said Frenchy.

Jim made sure he still had his four aces.

"One thousand better," he said.

Frenchy stayed.

"Smear 'em 'round," he said to Pete, "and give me the top one."

"He's got four of a kind, sure," I whispered in Jim's ear, as the latter also took one card.

"Bet 'em up, Jim," remarked some one in the crowd.

"Cover that, Frenchy," and Jim deliberately counted off $2,000 and pushed it into the pot.

"I see yer plunks and raise yer $5,000," coolly remarked Frenchy.

There was a pause, followed by a general shuffling of feet and a sort of combination gasp, as the ring of spectators pressed closer around the table. Then somebody turned the lamps up higher and Jim carefully counted out $5,000, which he pushed into the middle of the table, and then counted over what he had left.

"Only got about three thousand dollars left, Frenchy; 'less yer'll take me pardner here," said Jim, glancing up into my face with a smile in his eyes.

"I'll take 'im for two t'ousand, ef he's a-willin'," said Frenchy.

"Sure," says I.

"Five thousand up then," was Jim's answer.

"Five t'ousand more," said that double-dyed fiend, pushing in $10,000, and Jim's aces began to look uncommonly small.

"Ain't got nothin' left," remarked Jim, ruefully.

"Got yer claim," was the answer.

"Call yer with that, if it goes," said Jim.

"It goes."

"Aces," says Jim.

"Flush," says Frenchy.

"Four aces," says Jim.

"Straight flush," says Frenchy.

Several of Dandy Mack's oaths came in very handy. Even Jim swore.

Of course this hand ended the match amidst the greatest excitement.

"What did ye raise before the draw for, Frenchy?" asked Monkey Mike, and all present awaited the reply with great interest.

"Had a hunch," was the answer.

Turning to me, my owner remarked:

"Ya won't run away ef I let you go home to my new claim?"

"I'll be there in the morning," I replied, with as much dignity as I could assume.

"Ah may want ye to hang yourself, then," said the Canuck, with a malicious smile.

"It won't do you any good if you do, mister," I replied with a sneer.

"Jaintlemin, didn' I win heem all right? Don' he life belan' to me? Ef I say 'hang,' he hang; don' he?"

"That's right, said two or three voices—but nearly everybody scowled.

"Well, he'll have to do the hanging then, if he don't get hurt trying," I said, and marched out of the Yellow Dog Hotel with a curse, and found Jim waiting for me.

"I didn't mean for ter bet yer, pard; it was only a joke, till that black devil took me up so quick. He ain't got a grudge agin ye, has he?"

"I guess he feels sore about that call-down last week," and I started for my owner's new claim, with Jim keeping step beside me.

"I don't s'pose I got any right to camp here any more," remarked Jim, in a regretful tone, coming to a full stop at the door of the shack we called home.

"Come in—I can't keep you out. I'm only a slave threatened with a hanging," was my bitter answer.

"Don't ye be a-feard o' the hangin', pard," said Jim. "I'll shoot the pot-grabbing chunk of carrion on sight—s'elp me—ef he tries any funny business with ye"—and he stamped on the floor of the shack, first with one foot and then with the other, until every board and beam rattled a protest to such violence.

After a few more words we turned in, and just as the sun crowned the glittering snow-peaks with coronets of rubies and opals, accentuating the dark somber shadow of the canyon, we went sound to sleep.

It seemed to me that I had only closed my eyes for a few minutes when I was awakened by some one shaking me by the shoulder and, opening my eyes, I looked into the muzzle of a six-shooter.

The shanty was full of armed men, two of whom held Jim between them, while he stared about him in startled amazement.

"Are you fellows going to help Frenchy to hang me?" I asked, at the same time sitting upright in my bunk.

"We're a-goin' to hang ye right enough, an' all on account of Frenchy, but he ain't got nothin' to do with it, as you well know."

"Well, I don't know any reason for my being hanged, except that Frenchy threatened last night to hang me, and as I belong to him you haven't any right to rob him."

"Damn me, if you ain't a cool one. Frenchy was found dead not two hundred yards from here this morning, and nary a dollar left on him."

"Murdered!" was all I could stammer. And I know that I looked guilty, for at that moment all the circumstances flashed through my mind, and I even glanced suspiciously at Jim, so upset was I.

"Yes, murdered," answered my captor; "and by you and Jim thar. We boys is goin' to swing ye on Johnny's oak as a warnin' to poker players what can't lose right."

"I swear to you, boys, that the last we saw of Frenchy was at Jake's last night after the game. We came home and went to sleep. That's dead straight."

"You'll be dead straight, too, pretty soon," remarked some one; and the crowd laughed at the ghastly joke.

"It was bad enough to 'do' the Canuck, but when it comes to a-robbin' of dead bodies, we draws the line," said another.

"Boys," said Jim, "we're innercent, an' if we robbed Frenchy ye'll find the dust near by. Ef ye do, I a'n't got a word to say. Only give us a show fer our money."

"We don't think ye'd be fool enough to keep the stuff on ye," said Kansas Pete; and the next moment we were hustled out of the cabin, and headed straight for the lonely oak tree, which struggled hardily for existence, near the Yellow Dog Hotel.

Wakened out of a sound sleep, charged with a terrible crime, and hurried to execution with a rope already around my neck, I felt as though I must be dreaming—that the whole affair was some terrible nightmare; but I too soon realized that only a miracle could change the awakening from being in the next world.

Curiously enough, I did not feel frightened or nervous. Neither did the manifold sins of a careless career trouble my conscience. I simply felt a morbid curiosity as to how it felt to be hanged, and whether I would kick much. I hoped I wouldn't appear ridiculous.

In an incredibly short time Jim and I were standing side by side under a slanting limb of Johnny's oak. My old partner was pale, and there was a suspicious twitching about the corners of his mouth. As for me, I was told later that I sported a vacuous smile and tried to see the end of my nose by looking cross-eyed.

The ropes were over the branch, and a score of men were tailed onto the ends, ready to run up when the word should be given.

Then there was a pause, nuthing had been said, but a hush fell on the crowd, and a bright streak of sunshine streamed through a great rift in the mountain-side, and lit up the stern faces around us, and shone on Jim's, covering him with a glory of light, as though bathing him in a halo of innocence.

"Ef you fellers have got anything to say, spit it out quick!"

Jim turned slowly about, gazing at the ring of bronzed, pitiless faces, though here and there was one whiter than usual.

"Boys," he said in a voice which, though husky at first, grew strong and clear, even defiant, as he proceeded. "Boys, you fellers has come as near committin' a murder as ever was done in these parts. My pardner here," and he nodded toward me, but without looking at me, "is as innercent of hurtin' Frenchy as—as Jake's yaller dorg.

It was me that killed the Canuck. I laid fer him and jabbed him with my knife from behind. My pardner here was sound asleep. That's all. But ye got ter let him go."

For a moment the proverbial pin, if such a thing had been in camp, could have been heard to drop when Jim finished speaking. Some one took the rope from about my neck, cut the cords which bound my arms and gave me a gentle push.

A wave of horror thrilled every nerve in my body.

The next moment Jim was in the air. With a terrible yell I drew my knife and, with a leap, I had severed the fatal rope, and Jim fell in a heap at my feet, while a dozen men at the other end of the rope tumbled over each other.

"Hold on!" I cried. "Jim and I live or die together. He is as innocent as I am. Are we the only ones that lost to Frenchy last night? Where is Dandy Mack?" I shrieked in a frenzy as I stood over Jim's half-conscious form and brandished my knife.

A score of pistols leaped from their holsters.

"One moment!" I cried again. "Where's Dandy Mack? He is not here! He's the man—I tell you!"

"Yes, let's find him," cried a dozen voices, and Jim was saved.

Dandy Mack never was found, but that night there was a great run on the bar of the Yellow Dog Hotel, and old timers still tell of Jim's greatest bluff, where he staked his life to save the pardner he had lost.

"What's become of Jim, did you ask? Well, I'll introduce you to him when he comes in. We're pardners still."

Our March 1st number is going to contain a large number of fascinating detective and mystery stories. Do not miss reading them.

GUATEMALA THRICE DESTROYED

THRICE, and each time located in a different spot, the capital of Guatemala has been destroyed by earthquakes: in 1541, in 1773, and lastly in the recent shocks of Christmas week, 1917.

Close on to four centuries ago, in 1524, Pedro de Alvarado, a captain of Hernando Cortez, the intrepid conqueror of Mexico, penetrated this region for the first time and brought it under the banner of the King of Spain, and in 1527 his brother, Jorge Alvarado, founded the first capital of the new kingdom of Guatemala in the smiling valley of the Panchoy at the very base of the volcano of Agua.

On the night of September 10, 1541, says Sylvanus Griswold Morley, writing in the American Museum Journal, after some days of excessive rainfall, there was felt a prolonged and violent movement of the earth, and immediately thereafter the city was deluged by a torrent of water, mud and rocks, which, rushing down the side of the volcano of Agua, filled the city's streets, destroyed its houses and killed many of its inhabitants. In this calamity many people of the city, including Beatriz de la Cueva, the widow of the Adelantado and his successor in the rule of the kingdom, lost their lives. The Adelantada was drowned in the private chapel of her own home, whither she had fled with twelve of her ladies-in-waiting to escape the rushing waters.

This event cast a profound gloom over the survivors, and the following year the new capital, the second city of "Santiago de los Caballeros de Guatemala," was founded in the same valley but about one mile and a half east of the old location, that is, farther away from the base of the volcano. And all that now remains of the first capital is a crumbling ruin said to have been the house of Dona Beatriz. The site was not entirely abandoned, however, and a small village called La Ciudad Vieja (the old city) has since grown up there.

In time the new capital became the most magnificent and populous city in Central America, having as many as 60,000 inhabitants by the middle of the eighteenth century, and more than fifty churches, monasteries and convents. The Franciscans, Dominicans, Capuchins, Jesuits, Recollects, and of the sisterhoods those of Santa Theresa and Santa Clara, all had large and splendid establishments in the city, the ruins of which still excite the liveliest admiration. And all of this enterprise in the face of repeated discouragements on the part of nature, for the earthquakes continued at frequent intervals. Indeed, the history of the second city of Saint James of the Gentlemen is one long series of disastrous shocks: 1565, 1575, 1576, 1577 (two), 1586, 1607, 1651, 1663, 1679, 1681, 1683, 1684, 1687, 1689, 1702, 1717, 1719, 1751, 1757, 1765, and four during the latter part of 1773.

This last blow of fate, four shocks within a six-months (two even on the same day), was too much for the long-suffering citizens, and after many stormy sessions of the city council they finally decided to move the capital a second time. In favor of this change were the civil and military authorities; opposed were the ecclesiastics. Both the secular clergy and the monastic orders had too heavy an investment in churches and vast conventual establishments to view with equanimity any change which would tend to decrease property value.

Royal engineers were sent over from Spain, and after due deliberation and study a new site was chosen in the next valley, twenty miles east of the former capital; and in 1776 the third city of Santiago de los Caballeros de Guatemala was formally founded here, although the government itself was not moved over until three years later.

Again, as in the case of the first city, the second was not entirely abandoned. Many people refused to leave their homes, and under the name of Antigua the place has been occupied down to the present day. It is for all that, however, a city of the past; its magnificent churches and public buildings are in ruins and its population has shrunk from 60,000 to less than 10,000. The third city of Guatemala was located where it now stands because of the supposed immunity of the place from earthquakes. And when the site was chosen there were some grounds for such belief. There had stood here since 1620, on a little hill in the midst of the plain called the Cerrito del Carmen, a small church and monastery which had weathered successfully the numerous shocks of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The site, moreover, was surrounded on three sides by steep barrancas or canyons. Rightfully or wrongfully, the royal engineers believed these canyons to have been responsible for the immunity which the little church and the surrounding plain had enjoyed.

In due course of time and in spite of repeated shocks in 1827, 1830, 1852, 1853, 1855, 1861, 1862, 1870, 1873, 1874 and others of lesser intensity since, a new and still larger and more beautiful city grew up.

STORIES OF GREAT DETECTIVES

BY A NEW YORK JOURNALIST

The writer has had occasion professionally to learn a great deal about the real detectives. He has talked with them, corresponded with them, heard the narrative of their lives and exploits, and enjoyed in reality all the interest and excitement connected with these men that is constantly presented in the fiction of the day.

For the benefit of the thousands of readers of "Mystery Magazine," we propose to relate some of our experiences, and give a rapid glance at the most noted men in the different citis of the United States. The number of professional detectives is now very large. They are employed in every branch of the United States Government; all the great cities have a trained force, and the private agencies are to be found in all the cities, with correspondents throughout the civilized world. Our "Stories of Great Detectives" give, perhaps, the first familiar relation ever attempted of the characteristics of the great detectives who have made the detection of crime a new science.

ALLAN PINKERTON

IT is difficult to find any new and extensive business in the United States, or elsewhere, which does not show in its founder some man differing from his fellow-men in marked particulars. Allan Pinkerton, who was justly regarded as the founder of the detective business as a profession in this country, was this sort of a man. He was to be found at the headquarters of the National Detective Agency, in Chicago, which has important branches in New York and Philadelphia. Years ago Mr. Pinkerton was doing a large business in Chicago, and now it is so extensive in the main office and branches that the superintendent in New York remarked to us, "The institution is so immense that it is almost unwieldly."

Allan Pinkerton was an original—every inch of him. From his youth up he exhibited strong and notable points of character, and he made them the underlying force in the establishment of the National Detective Agency. Naturally he attracted much attention, and his name will live in the future as the founder of a business which must continue to increase in both its extent and usefulness, but will never exceed in the comprehensiveness which he has given it from the very outset. Hence the reader will find a closer personal view of him entertaining. A great detective himself, he has been made a model by hundreds of younger men, who have reached distinction in the same occupation.

In his early life, in Scotland, Allan Pinkerton became a reader, and, what is more, a thinker. We venture to say that no man anywhere ever imbibed more of the ardor of freedom. He was thirteen years of age when what was known as Chartism had its rise in England. This was following the widespread distress and popular disappointment that occurred after the adoption of the reform bill of 1832. In 1838, when Allan Pinkerton had reached nineteen, with his head and heart full of the sufferings of the people, the "people's charter" was drawn up in England, and became the political creed of all liberty-loving men throughout Great Britain. The principal points were universal suffrage, vote by ballot, paid representation, abolition of property qualifications for representation, annual parliaments, and equal electoral districts. The people spoke boldly in their public meetings. There were outbreaks and riots, and many prominent Chartists were imprisoned and transported.

Allan Pinkerton was then a boss cooper in Glasgow, and he was also one of those sturdy patriots who subscribed heartily to the new and radical political principles. He stood in the streets and talked and argued upon those subjects, and while he worked he poured the same fervent sentiments into the ears of all listeners. Then he spoke in public meetings. He was in the flower of young manhood; his mind was naturally intelligent, and also well informed, and he spoke with eloquence and a freedom which was natural to a brave man. As with many other men on British soil, his appeal for liberty was called sedition, and he was obliged to fly to avoid imprisonment.

With his young bride he hastily embarked for America. Not that he loved his native Scotland any less, but because he found that for the time power could overwhelm right. In the Gulf of St. Lawrencee the vessel was wrecked, and the passengers took refuge on an island. No hand was more ready, no arm stronger, and no spirit more cheerful than those of Allan Pinkerton under trying circumstances.

At length we find him in the then wilderness of Illinois, working at his trade. He made barrels and tubs in the most skillful manner. He often thought of the great change which had come about. Here he was not only across the broad Atlantic, but far, far in the western interior of the country. "It is not Scotland," was the burden of many a thought as he hammered away at the hoops of barrel and tub; "there is only one Scotland, but this is free America."

When he had accumulated a quantity of his work he went with it from Dundee to Chicago, which was a distance of forty miles. He soon became well known in Chicago. When he sold anything he was not forgotten. In the first place, he talked so shrewdly and so honestly, with wit and joke and sense thrown in, that he was looked upon as one of the most singular of all the persons visiting the city; and, in the second place, a Pinkerton barrel or tub was found to wear well, and to be as honest in every hoop and stave as he was himself.

One thing that he always denounced was crime. Next to his love of liberty was his hatred of those who broke the laws. Consequently, when the sheriff of the county wanted assistance in the pursuit of some desperate horse-thief or other criminal he made the industrious cooper his deputy. At this call for the protection of the community down went his tools on the instant, the fleetest horse was obained, and off went Allan Pinkerton, fearless of all danger. By day and night he traversed a wilderness of swamps and forests, "the Nemesis of some desperate criminal." He was often only too happy, after hours of severe riding, to come across the nameless clearing whose few scattered houses bespoke a prospect of refreshment and information. When he returned, generally with his prisoner, he resumed his work where he had left it, feeling always that he had done his best for the public.

It was not long before it became evident that there was something more important for him in the world than making barrels and tubs. He went to Chicago, and, after acting as a deputy sheriff, finally began to work out the idea which became the National Detective Agency.

Here we may mention that, after his arrival in the United States, Mr. Pinkerton became a very ardent and outspoken anti-slavery man. His love of universal liberty did not permit him to regard for a single moment the constitutional bearings of this question, of which he heard and read so much. He did not hesitate to aid slaves to escape, and often kept them employed when they had escaped, or placed them on the famous "underground railroad" for Canada.

Mr. Pinkerton had always made men and their motives his deepest study. In Scotland and in the United States, wherever he had been, he found both pleasure and profit in the closest observation in regard to all persons. Hence, from united observation, reflection and comparisons, he acquired an extraordinary ability to judge of faces, and to divine motives and actions. When he saw a face he never forgot it, and when he saw it for the first time he was able to read the character and purposes of the individual. It became his habit to scrutinize every face in the streets as he went along. He has been known to shadow a person who, to the ordinary observer, had nothing to indicate that he was other than a type of respectability—quiet, well-dressed and gentlemanly in every particular. The keen detective, however, felt convinced that the person was "in some way associated with the fraternity of crime," as it proved in the end.

In his younger days he was a man of great strength, which was united with an unflinching courage. He felt himself equal to any emergency with the most desperate men. The grip of his hand was like the teeth of a bulldog, and he was as agile as it was possible to be. He undertook business of the most exciting and dangerous kind, and he took part in it himself. No philosopher ever looked more carefully and intelligently into learned questions than Allan Pinkerton into the nature of each crime and criminal. When a case was stated to him he listened with the deepest attention, and made full memoranda of the facts and statements. When he finally gave his own opinion, very shrewd men of business sometimes laughed themselves, and were astonished. They found him a keen student of human nature—a man read in all sorts of books, and posted in the law. They found him outspoken, independent, and even stubborn. He was willing enough to receive suggestions, and, in fact, sought them, but when he became fully assured of his own convictions he was not to be moved.

His interest in the cases was something intense. Day and night they were upon his mind, and it was most annoying to him to have a single mishap in the working of his elaborate plans. However, this very seldom occurred. These were his own words in regard to the favorable aspects of an important case, which he was personally directing:

"How happy did I now feel! All care was gone, the weight of sorrow had been lifted from my breast as if by the hand of magic; hope had taken the place of despair, and I returned to Philadelphia with renewed energy and firmness, bound to win beyond a peradventure."

He was a very hard worker, but after such labors he took much pleasure in a good cigar and a social chat. Sometimes a detective would rush in with unexpected information, when in an instant the cigar would be tossed away and the business would command his whole attention. Much of his time was spent in the preparation of numerous books, giving an account of the exciting detective work in which himself and his agency have been engaged.

In his family he was at once an affectionate and a just man. He taught his children the fear of God, obedience to their parents, and to seek in every way to lead respectable and useful lives. A love of liberty for all men and a hatred of crime were other teachings of his fireside. He wrote well, and had a pleasing imagination. His appreciation of the beauties of nature and his admiration of standard poetry were shown in both his conversation and writings. The wonderful penetration and unflinching courage of the man are well shown in a case which he described himself, and which we have special permission to make use of.

When strolling up Lake street, in Chicago, one sultry July evening, he saw an apparently respectable man passing along. He was "on the scent" in a moment, though there was no reason for it except the intuitive idea that took possession of him that the man was a criminal. Mr. Pinkerton went into a clothing store and borrowed a coat and a broad-brimmed hat. He followed the man to a hotel frequented by the farmers, who at that date came to Chicago with their grain and other produce in wagons. From the opposite side of the street he watched the man register, and then went in and examined the book, and found that he had signed himself as "John H. Harmond, of St. Louis, Missouri," and that room No. 29 had been assigned to him. Pinkerton did not know the name, and was still in doubt about the man, but did not leave the vicinity of the hotel until late at night.

"Spent with fatigue and heat," relates Mr. Pinkerton, "I betook myself home, and went promptly to bed, where I continued to ruminate on the suspicious guest of the Waverly, till sober thought had merged itself into dreams. About three o'clock in the morning I arose and proceeded to dress, but after a fashion extremely unusual with me, I first put on an old pair of pantaloons, overlaid in parts with quaint-looking patches and ventilated through sundry gaping rents. Thick-soled, rusty long boots, into the legs of which I crammed the trousers—a shirt, of coarse blue check, and a faded frock coat that had long been repudiated in decent society, also made part of my outfit, while an ancient and seedy slouch hat and a brown-stained clay pipe crowned and completed the uncouth costume. With a tin dinner pail in my hand and a mortar shovel slung over my shoulder I now sallied forth in the early dawn, to all appearance a genuine son of the old sod."

He had observed a heap of mortar in front of the hotel, and he now went to it and at once dashed his shovel into it, and then proceeded to smear his boots and spatter his clothing with the pasty mixture. He exulted in the notion that the most cunning jailbird would hardly dream of a detective under the garb of an Irish hodman. He threw his coat over a pile of laths, rolled up his shirt sleeves and then began mixing the mortar.

At about a quarter past five the self-styled Mr. Harmond made his appearance outside of the hotel. He stood upon the doorstep smiling, as if charmed with the prospect of the radiant summer sky. He looked around significantly as though in search of some kindred spirit who might participate in his raptures. Soon he stepped down on the sidewalk, and in an easy, dawdling sort of way, with his thumbs hooked in his waistband, made two or three short turns in front of the hotel. In the same listless manner he went along towards Clark street. Edging around the mortar bed and shoveling away at the limous compound, Mr. Pinkerton did not cease to observe the man closely.

"My course was promptly decided on," says Mr. Pinkerton. "The moment Mr. Harmond had disappeared around the corner I picked up my tattered coat, dashed it on hastily, and slinging the mortar shovel over my shoulder left the scene of my labors and strode along into Clark street. The object of my attention was now some distance ahead, quietly making towards the bridge, with still

the same backward occasional glance over the way by which he had come."

Harmond went to the depot of the Michigan Central Railroad. He made the purchase of a ticket, and Pinkerton was sufficiently near to hear mention of Detroit, Michigan. It was twenty minutes before the regular train time.

"Once more I was in a quandary," says Mr. Pinkerton. "Should I arrest this man? and on what pretext? and how? and when? What if he had a friend, or friends—desperate characters, probably—to join him on the train? Must I try to secure them all? Would I be equal to the task? Might I calculate on help, if help became necessary? To answer all my own questions in a breath, I may state that I resolved to arrest Harmond anyhow, and trust to good fortune and my shovel in the event of a violent resistance."

From the depot the man went slowly towards the margin of the lake. On that side of the railroad all was solitude. Harmond himself was the only person visible along the shore. Pausing at some distance from the water's edge, he stooped down and began quite vigorously to scoop out the sand with his fingers.

Soon he lifted out two trays of glittering rings, which he hastily transferred by the handful from those receptacles to his pockets—the flash of their jewels in the sunlight giving token the while that they were gems of price. A number of small articles were next taken up, which, on being divested of their temporary coverings, appeared in the distance to be gold and silver watches. These the man consigned to the breast pocket of his coat, and after throwing the trays and wrappers back into the little pit, heaped some sand over them with his foot, and then turned leisurely back to the depot. All this time Mr. Pinkerton had been watching him from the steps of one of the cars. Coming to the west side of the car track, Harmond moved quickly through the waiting groups, and at once took his seat in the proper coach.

In five minutes more the train would start.

"I snatched from my pocket," says Mr. Pinkerton, "a pair of steel handcuffs, without which I seldom went abroad in those times. Jumping into the car, I laid my shovel in a corner and went up to the bench behind that on which Harmond was seated. He was an active and powerful fellow, but I was then in the bloom of strength and manhood and I felt myself equal to any emergency."

He instantly seized the man by the coat collar, with the stern announcement:

"You are my prisoner."

As the man was about to spring up, Mr. Pinkerton threw his own right arm around under his chin, and gripping him by the wrist with his left hand, choked him back so tightly that he could not move or speak.

In a moment all was confusion in the car.

"This man is a thief!" shouted Mr. Pinkerton to the gaping passengers; "will some one take these handcuffs and put them on his wrists?"

The handcuffs were visible to all, but nobody made a show of giving assistance. Indeed, there was a manifest reluctance to give any countenance whatever to this clownish, lime-spotted hodman's declaration that a seeming gentleman was a thief.

The conductor and a brakeman rushed into the car. Mr. Pinkerton was well known to the conductor, but his angry stare now showed that he did not recognize him. Disengaging his left hand for an instant, Mr. Pinkerton dashed off his hat and shouted:

"Don't you know me, Steve? I want to take this thief off your train; don't you know who I am?"

"Jee-roo-salem!" exclaimed Steve, "is that yourself? Of course I know—but who in thunder could expect to meet you in such a rig as that?"

"Jake," he added promptly, addressing himself to the brakeman, "lend a hand here to put the irons on that chap, lively—we haven't any time to lose."

In less than a minute the prisoner was securely handcuffed, when Mr. Pinkerton released his painful hold on the man's neck.

"Better clear out of the car, quick," now said the conductor. "I'm already nearly five minutes behind time. By-by, neighbor; I shall see you when I get in again, I suppose?"

"Yes, yes, Steve," returned Mr. Pinkerton, as he moved toward the door, dragging his prisoner along with him. "I'll tell you all about this when you get back—it's a capital story and we'll smoke a good cigar over it."

At length Mr. Pinkerton was on the patform, with the manacled Harmond completely in his power, and the shovel—which he had recovered in passing out—again in his possession. Grasping the shovel firmly in his right hand, to be promptly used in case of an attempt to escape, he now took the prisoner and led him quickly away to prison.

It was found that this man had robbed nineteen persons of their money or watches at the hotel, and a traveling jeweler at another place. He was indicted the same day, pleaded guilty, was sentenced to nineteen years' imprisonment, and on the following morning started for the penitentiary.

Before pleading guilty the prisoner made some remarks to the court, in the course of which he said:

"This whole thing looks like a dream to me, but I might as well save trouble by pleading guilty to those charges. At the time of my arrest this morning I did not recognize Detective Pinkerton, but now I know him pretty well. I thought while on my way to jail that I might somehow manage to buy myself off, but when I learned whose hands I was in I saw that I was completely euchred."

And so it has been always with the most desperate and shrewdest criminals, they have been "completely euchred" by Allan Pinkerton.

Our next article will deal with a biography of another celebrated officer who has made his name and remarkable work known to every civilized man in the world—Andrew L. Drummond.

ANIMALS THAT NEVER DRINK

A CURIOUS fact in connection with animal life on the deserts of the American Southwest is that rabbits, quail, squirrels, deer, antelope, the mountain sheep and any number of reptiles and insects live at great distances from visible water. The jack rabbit is specially notable in this respect; and, moreover, flourishes in regions without a particle of green food in sight for miles and miles. It may be found, happy and fat, spending the day under a scrap of bush that makes little more shade than a fishing net. His skin is as porous as a piece of buckskin, and the heat is sufficient to evaporate every drop of blood in his body, yet he seems to get on very nicely. The local people maintain that no one has ever seen a jack rabbit drink. Men have gone so far as to examine the margins of waterholes in those districts, with never a track of the rabbit disclosed beyond where the grass grew.

A COAT SLEEVE

The Story of a New York Detective

By G. G. SMALL

CHAPTER SIX

I WAS foolish enough to try and explain that I was an officer of the law, just as though they didn't hold them in contempt; and the result was, as before stated, that I got most beautifully snubbed, and never learned a thing I was after.

I reported to Chief Matsell, expecting to be reproved.

I was not.

"It was not your fault that she had flown, because you were in Philadelphia. It is only one of those cases continually recurring in our business. But, after all, it isn't so bad," said the old chief spiritedly.

"Do you think so?" I asked.

"No. It concentrates things?"

"How?"

"Why, you were going to-morrow in quest of the Wilburs."

"Yes; according to orders."

"Very well. We have got the whole thing down to fine points now, and what you want to do is to embrace this woman Page in the lot you are to watch in future. You have worked up the business this far all right. Now catch the murderers, and we will straighten everything out before the public, and demand of them peans of praise which they cannot withhold. Good-night."

Well, after all, this rather pleased me, for I had thought all along that the best chances were being neglected, and so I hailed with delight the order that sent me out in quest of them, and especially the cool-headed woman who was so successfully personifying Mrs. Thomas Page.

That they were all of a branch, I had no doubt now, and it was my ambition to catch them all in the same net.

The first day was productive of no results, and the second day the chief assigned me a side-partner, the man who had secured Mike so handsomely.

He was, of course, older in the business than I was, and in a meaner man there would have been evidences of jealousy, and an inclination to take matters in his own hands, but not so with brave Phil.

We went over the whole ground together, and I told him all that I had done. He frankly complimented me on doing good work, and said he would do all in his power to help me to finish the job successfully.

This gave me new heart in the business and from that time forth we became not only side-partners in that, but in many other cases, and friends for life.

Phil was pretty well known to the rogues of New York and its neighborhood, and so it was thought prudent for both of us to adopt a slight disguise.

"Yes, we shall want several of them before we are through with this, more than likely; for, between you and I, I think this is going to be a long hunt," said Phil.

"Yes, or we may perhaps scoop them all in at once without wasting much time over them," said I.

"Yes; but the case has too many branches to be worked up very quickly.

This I knew as well as any one did, but still I hoped for short work.

We were on our way down-town on the morning of our second day's partnership, when we concluded to take a short cut through Baxter street in order to reach Chatham street.

This is the region of old clothes, the redolence of which vied with the filth in the streets, and the dirt and grime of the houses or stores (for dwelling-house and store is all one to them) greets the nostrils so pungently that it is often hard to say which smells the loudest.

Old clothes of every style, quality, and description fluttered over the narrow sidewalks as thick as leaves in Vallambrosia, from grave to gay, from livery to severe.

And it is impossible to go through that grime-famed thoroughfare without being pestered half out of the most Christian-like temper in the world, on account of the importunities of the barkers who accosted you, urging you to buy.

It makes no odds whether you are dressed in the height of fashion or whether you look like a tramp; whether you have everything on that any man requires, they will still importune; and if you do not tear yourself away they will try to convince you that you are positively in need of some garment which they hold up to you, and which is infinitely inferior to what you may have on at the time.

But to a student of human nature, or to a humorist, a study of Baxter street was of much value.

It was especially funny to see them tackle a countryman who may happen to stray through the dingy street. They will go for him with a specimen of everything they have got; but if they cannot sell him anything, they will get what they can towards paying them for their time and trouble by clipping buttons from his coat.

It is funny to stand and look at when some other fellow is the victim, but not a bit that way if you chance to be the victim yourself.

Many of these Baxter street merchants employ solicitors of old clothes who scour the city in quest of them, and when they get to be a little better off and are able to take a store on some of the avenues, then you will find their advertisements in the papers, offering the "highest prices" for ladies' and gentlemen's cast-off clothing.

This is, of course, no news to you, who have not only seen, but written of them.

We had got nearly half-way through the street, mad enough at the importunities that had confronted us, and the attempts actually made to detain and coerce us into buying a complete outfit of some kind (it didn't make the slightest difference to them whether they sold winter clothing in mid-summer, or summer clothing in mid-winter), when I caught sight of a coat suspended in one of those dirty, dingy doorways

It instantly attracted my attention, and I stopped, as did Phil.

We were immediately beset by the old man who kept the store, his wife and daughter, who was the masher of the business.

"What is it?" whispered Phil.

"Do you see that coat?"

"Yes."

"You see the cloth?"

"Yes, and, by Jove——"

"Hush!

"Ah! good-morning," said the proprietor, patting me on the shoulder, while the old woman bowed, and her daughter smiled most killingly. "I vos glad to see dot you is chendlemens of splendit chudgemend, und know vere der best blace is der py glodins."

"Well, no nonsense, now. What do you ask for that coat?" I demanded.

"Ah, mine frient, dot vos a very nice goat. Id vos a fine biece of French goots, und vos imported by me to introduce id into dis goundry."

"I see that the right sleeve is made of another kind of cloth, resembling the other part of the coat in color only. How is that?"

"Mine frient, don'd gife id away," he said, in a confidential whisper; "bud dot vos der ladest sdyle from Paris."

"Well, all right. How much for it?"

"Now, I vos hurd mine pizness, bud mine moddo is, 'mage a drade.'"

"And catch a sucker as often as you can," suggested Phil.

"No, mine frient; I vos a skvare man, und every sdore-keeper in Paxter streed is down on me pecause I always speaks der druth.

"Well, never mind. I don't care a snap whether you do or not. How much for the coat?"

"Den tollers."

"Will you take five dollars for the coat?"

"Vale, dake id along. Py chimminy," he growled, as he proceeded to roll up the coat in a piece of dirty paper, never thinking of the little formality of tying it, or to see whether it fitted me or not, "I bade dot mine gusdomers understant dot dey can ged a firsd pargain owid of me for noddings."

"Now, I'll give you a dollar more if you will tell me where you got this coat," said I.

"Vy, I boughd id, ofe course."

"To be sure, but that is not what I offered you the dollar for. Of whom did you buy it?"

He conversed a moment with his daughter in German, and then turning to me, said:

"I cannod dell you; I hafe a man owid gollecting second-hand gloding, und he god it somevere."

"And you put in another sleeve as near like the remaining one as possible. Oh, there is no occasion to mince matters with me. I didn't buy the coat for myself, and don't care a snap whether you have made three or four, or four dollars and a half on it. That is what you did?"

"Vale, yes. I het bud von sleefe in id, und I dinks id vos torn off in some fighd, for we ofden ged such dings, und so I fint some gloth dot vos so like id as bossible und bud in a new sleefe. Pizness is pizness, you know."

"Oh, yes; but where is that man of yours?"

"He is owid somevere addending to gusdomers."

"And when will he return?"

"He will pe here dis efenings."

I turned to consult with Phil, and the clothing dealer talked with his family. It was evident that they feared they might lose that dollar after all.

"Say, mine taughder say dot he vos sick do-day, und dot he is nod owid," he said.

"Yes, give me the tollar, und I go find him for you," said the damsel, coming forward with a smile.

"Very well, bring him here, or take me to him, and here is your dollar," said I.

"You vait insite, und I'll pring him," said she, tripping away.

In less than five minutes she returned, accompanied by a wheezing little fellow, who seemed light enough to blow away.

"Here is the man that bought the coat," said she, holding out her hand.

I unrolled the coat and showed it to him.

"Did you buy this coat?"

"I did." He spoke very good English, which was perhaps the reason why he was sent out to buy.

"All right; here is your dollar, girl."

"Thanks."

"Oh, no thanks required; you have earned it. Now, my good sir, if you will go with us and show us of whom you bought this garment, you can earn a five-dollar bill," I added, turning to the little buyer.

"But it might—it might——" he hesitated, and looked at the clothier, who said something to him in a whisper.

"Might what?"

"Might get me in trouble."

"Nonsense. I simply wish to find the man of whom you bought this coat. Your transaction was a simple one, and of course you have nothing to fear, and the five dollars will be more than you can earn in a week. When did you buy it?"

"Last Monday, I believe."

"Yes, you brought id in last Monday night," said the girl.

"All right. Come with us and show us where you bought it, and of whom."

But the fellow hesitated. These second-hand clothing dealers are, the most of them, crooked, and have no desire to allow their transactions to be under-run.

"Will you go?" I asked again.

"I don't care to," said he, finally.

"All right; then I shall have to arrest you."

"Arrest me!" he exclaimed; and in an instant all was consternation in that clothing shop.

Indeed, the second-hand clothes were all in tiers.

I opened my vest and showed him my shield, and this added to the excitement, for now they saw that they had been dealing with a brace of detectives, and that there was some very strong reasons why I should want that coat, and to know where it came from.

"Will you go without being put under arrest?" I asked of the buyer.

"Oh, go along, Nats!" cried mother and daughter, while the father seemed stupefied.

"Cot in himmel!" he finally exclaimed. "Go mit 'em, Nats. Oh, dot a bolicemans should efer pe seen in my sdore!"

"Well, if there is no help for it, I will go," said the little man, finally.

"That is the best thing you can do. What is your name?"

"Nathan Metzer."

"Yes, we call him Nats for short," ventured the girl, with a smile that was charming and bland.

"Well, all right. Which way?"

"Up East Broadway."

"Then we will walk; it is not far."

"Near Jefferson street," said Nats.

"Oh, it is, eh?" asked Phil, interested seemingly for the first time—that is to say, more than ordinarily interested.

"Yes, sir."

"Three doors this side of Jefferson street?"

"Yes, sir."

"On the East side?"

"Yes, sir."

"That's all right," he whispered to me.

"Know anybody there?"

"Well, I should say so. Why, Tom Duff, the most desperate rascal in New York, lives there, or did a week ago," said he.

"So, so!" said I.

"But are you sure about the goods?" he added.

"Certainly. Look here!" and I took the sleeve from my pocket and compared the texture.

I also measured the length, and found them to be as nearly alike as possible.

"That settles it. I'll bet a thousand that Tom Duff was mixed up in that matter, for I have said all along that there was more than one man connected with it. Tom is a pal of 'Mike's,' and I can see through it all."

"But the other fellow?"

"Never mind him now. Come on."

Reluctantly enough Nats accompanied us, but never was a family made happier than that second-hand clothing dealer's when they saw us take our leave.

There were undoubtedly crooked things in the place, or crooked transactions somewhere that made them so exceedingly nervous.

"The thief doth fear each bush an officer," says Shakespeare, and it is no wonder that these people felt shaky when they found that there were officers actually in their place.

We put Nats ahead of us so that he could not elude us, and allowed him to lead the way, which he did, doggedly.

"How are you fixed?" asked Phil.

"A good revolver. How are you?"

"Same; and don't you forget that we shall have occasion to use them if he don't catch him dead to rights, for Tom Duff is one of the ugliest customers in New York.

"I have heard of him."

"And so have I. Indeed, I helped arrest him about five years ago, and he managed, by hiring big lawyers, to get off with three years for a 'sneak.' He's a tough one."

"Have you heard anything about him of late?" I asked.

"Yes, but he has been laying low since his return to the city. And he is just the chap to catch on to a thing like this.

We discussed the matter as we walked along, all the while with our eyes on Nats, whom we knew would only be too glad of a chance to get away, until finally we reached the house before mentioned.

It was only about ten o'clock at this time, and we were pretty certain to find him in bed yet, as he was a late stayer and a late riser.

Some of the houses on East Broadway nowadays are only the wrecks of what they were then, they were mostly occupied by the lower classes—the front door almost always open, and everything seemingly free to the public.

At this time there were only a few boarding-houses even, the others being owned by their occupants, and held quite aristocratic.

Arriving there, I rang the bell, and the servant of the boarding-house answered it.

"It's all right—we want to see Tim Duff," said Phil, and hesitatingly she admitted us.

"Is he up yet?" I asked.

"I think not," said she.

"All right; we'll go up and rout him out," and placing Nats ahead of us, we told him to conduct us to the room where he bought the coat.

"That is the room," said he, pointing to the door of the front room, first floor.

"Hold on," said Phil—"I have an idea. I know another of his pals, who came down from Sing Sing only a day or two ago. Let me work it," he added, and approaching the door, he rapped upon it thrice, this being generally understood among crossmen.

"Ho! who's there?" we heard a voice call.

"It's me, Tom."

"Who?"

"Tim Flynn."

"Is that so?" we heard again, and then there was a movement within the room.

Nats was dreadfully nervous, and evidently wanted to get away, but we had him.

"Wait a moment, Tim," we heard again.

"That's him," whispered Phil. "Have your tool ready, for we must jump on him."

"All right. I am ready," I whispered.

It seemed a long time, but was probably not one minute before the bolt of the door was thrown back and it was opened.

Tom started back with an exclamatory oath.

"Hold up your hands, Tom!" said Phil, as both he and I covered him with our revolvers.

"What the devil does this mean?" he demanded, after recovering from his surprise.

"It means that you are our prisoner. Put out your dukes, Tommy," said Phil.

The man seemed paralyzed, and before he really knew what the meaning of the business was, his wrists were encircled with a pair of steel bracelets.

"Is that the man from whom you bought that coat?" I asked, turning to Nats, who was trembling like a wind-shaken reed.

"Y—yes," he stammered.

"That coat!" exclaimed Tom, starting back wildly at the sight of it.

"Yes. Of course you remember it?"

"No; I never saw it before in my life," said he, stoutly.

"All right, we'll see about that later. Nats, you will have to go along with us," I said.

"What for?" he moaned.

"For a witness. Here is your five dollars. But you will have to come along."

That five-dollar bill didn't seem much to him then, when on any other occasion it would have made him feel rich.

"What is the meaning of this?" again demanded Tom Duff, indignantly.

"It will be explained hereafter, Tom."

"Oh, it will, eh?" he sneered, and then, turning to Nats, he said: "If you swear that you bought that coat of me, I will see that you are framed."

Nats seemed about to sink to the floor.

"Oh! that's all right. We don't depend on this poor devil for our points."

"What is it, anyhow?"

"The murder of Thomas Page," said I.

The rascal staggered backwards and seemed more utterly paralyzed than before. But he had evidently suspected from the start what it was, for since his liberation he had been in but little crooked work.

(To be continued)

CURRENT NEWS

PEKING HAS OLDEST COLLEGE

The oldest university in the world is at Peking. It is called the "School for the Sons of the Empire." Its antiquity is great, and a grand register, consisting of 320 stone columns, is reputed to contain the names of 60,000 graduates.

FISH-SKIN SHOES

At the recent exposition of the chemical industries at Grand Central Palace there was an interesting exhibit of leather made from the skin of fishes, shark, porpoise and tuna-fish, which showed it to be as full of good qualities as is leather made from the skins of animals.

Scientists at the Pratt Institute and the Unied States Bureau of Fisheries have been experimenting upon fish-skin as a substitute for leather, and the raw-hide of sharks and porpoises already is in commercial use. Porpoise-skin razor strops have been used for years, and other kinds of fish-leather would have been on the market long ago, the scientists say, had it not been that there was an abundance of real leather.

NEWEST THINGS

For the standardization of dyes and textiles a color card has been issued for general use by a New York concern which shows 128 shades, named principally from natural objects.

A machine has been invented by a Scotchman that prepares flax for manufacture within a few hours after it has been pulled from the ground instead of taking days, or even weeks, as usual.

A new reel for motion picture films carries a label on one side on which to write the name of the film and other information, made of material from which the writing can be erased easily.

It is believed the coal obtained in the operation will pay much of the cost of building a proposed tunnel under the Firth of Forth in Scotland, as there are mines at each end of the projected line.

A LONG-LIVED FAMILY

You can't mention the Michigan brand of longevity without starting something in the nature of a procession, and sometimes a whole blessed family comes down on you at once. For instance, Mrs. Mary Home, of Jonesville, is active in mind and body at the age of ninety-four. Her sister, Mrs. Julia Snedeker, of Battle Creek, is well at ninety-seven, and performs needle-work of the finest kind. Another sister, the late Mrs. Lovina Austin, died in Jonesville at ninety-three. The father of these three sisters lived to be ninety-eight. One great-aunt lived to 110, and another to 118.

Mrs. Mary Howe's son, Charles N. Howe, seventy years old, married recently in Litchfield a bride of sixty. Mrs. Lovina Austin, previously mentioned, was the mother of thirteen children, and when in her nineties was frequently visited by her eldest son, Frank Austin, of Ypsilanti, who was in his seventies.

WIND-DRIVEN DYNAMOS

An account was recently given in *Ingenioren* by Mr. H. C. Vogt, of some experience of the utilization of wind power for driving dynamos. The mills described had sails 100 feet in diameter and an area of 3,930 square feet. With a mean wind velocity of 24 feet per second, 290 horse-power was obtained. Power is transmitted from the main shaft by a series of cog wheels with the spokes in tension; rope and chain gearing were found not to answer. By means of gearing the speed of the main shaft, 12½ revolutions per minute, in increased to 1,500 revolutions per minute for the dynamo.

STEEL BAND AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR LEATHER BELT

The scarcity of leather brought about by the war has made it necessary to find a substitute for that material, particularly in the case of belting. At the Ickern mine in the Herne mining district in Germany, a steel band is being used to replace a leather main driving belt 52 feet in length and 7 inches in breadth. The width of the band is only 3 inches, and the ends are joined by means of small screws. The driving pulley has a diameter of 3 feet. The cost of the band was about $65. Though, from some undiscovered cause, this band gave way near the joint, the mine authorities, in view of the many advantages of the steel band, have decided to repeat the experiment.

QUEER CHRISTMAS CEREMONY AT QUEEN'S COLLEGE

A Christmas ceremony, unique in these days, although once common, was witnessed again at Queen's College, Oxford, where there is an annual revival of the medieval custom of carrying a boar's head in procession to the Christmas banquet. The procession forms in the buttery, and is led by a soloist, followed by two servants carrying the boar's head on a silver salver. The head is surmounted by a jewelled crown and decked with bay and rosemary. A surpliced choir follows in the procession and the student body marches after, into the great dining hall, where, in the 578 years of the history of Queen's College, many of the greatest men of England have dined and made merry.

A POWERFUL JET.

A factory in Grenoble, France, utilizes the water of a reservoir situated in the mountains at a height of 200 yards. The water reaches the factory through a vertical tube of the same length, with a diameter of considerably less than an inch, the jet being used to move a turbine. Experiments have showed that the strongest men cannot cut the jet with the best tempered sword; and in some instances the blade has been broken into fragments without deflecting a drop of the water, and with as much violence as a pane of glass may be shattered by a blow from an iron bar. It has been calculated that a jet of water a small fraction of an inch in thickness moving with sufficient velocity could not be cut by a rifle bullet.

COLORED SNOW IN WISCONSIN

A study has been made by Messrs. A. N. Winchell and E R. Miller, of the University of Wisconsin, of a shower of dust which discolored falling snow at Madison and elsewhere. According to somewhat scanty reports, this colored snow covered an area of at least 10,000 square miles and probably much more. The total quantity of dust is estimated to have been at least a million tons, and may have greatly exceeded this, perhaps even amounting to hundreds of millions of tons. A study of the character of the dust and of the attendant meteorological conditions leads to the belief that the dust was blown all the way from arid regions in the far Southwestern United States, and was therefore transported a thousand miles or more.

CURIOUS BURIAL RITES

In Greenland, when a child dies, the relatives bury a dog with it to guide it, certain that a dog will find his way anywhere. The Russians have a custom of placing a paper passport in the hand of the deceased to be shown to Peter at the gate of heaven. At one time in Wales "sin eaters" were employed to eat a loaf of bread over the dead body, and in this way they took the burden of the deceased's sins. There is no nation as a whole which does not believe that the soul continues to exist after it leaves the body, and the origin of many funeral rites is the belief that death means the soul's transition from one state to another and that it is necessary to entertain the soul on the journey. Hence it is that wives, servants, horses, money, weapons, musical instruments, meat and drink are among the things buried with the body. The Laplanders supply the corpse with flint, steel and tinder wherewith to obtain light by the way.

THE CROCODILE FISH

In the rivers and lakes of the Mexican State of Tabasco there swims a fish known as the "crocodile fish," which, according to word received at the Department of Commerce and Labor, is most useful to man. The skin of the crocodile fish, if properly cured, may be utilized for any of the purposes for which the lighter weights of leather are employed. The oil of the crocodile fish is a perfect lubricant, and also used for softening leather. In addition to its qualities as a lubricant and emollient, the oil possesses medicinal qualities for which a superiority to the finest of Norwegian cod liver is claimed. The flesh of the crocodile fish is extensively used by the natives as food and highly relished by them as one of the delicacies of the country. Crocodile fish range in length from ten inches to four feet, and when dried assume an ashen hue, with lighter shadings of a bluish tint.

MISSIONARY FIRST "STRUCK OIL"

The first white man, as far as can be determined, to discover petroleum in America, was Joseph de la Roche D'Allon, a French missionary, who speaks of his discovery in a letter written 189 years ago. He had crossed the Niagara River and made his way southward through Western New York into Northern Pennsylvania, where he found a spring from which oil flowed. The oil was highly esteemed by the Indians for medicinal uses. This old spring was probably identical with one described by the *Massachusetts Magazine* in 1789, which speaks of "a creek called Oil Creek, which issues from a spring, on the top of which floats an oil, similar to that called Barbados tar, and from which one may gather several gallons a day." The waters of this spring were supposed to possess many healing qualities.

ACROSS TO FRANCE

The giant steamer *Leviathan*, formerly the Hamburg-American liner *Vaterland*, transported 94,195 American fighting men to France since she first sailed from New York as an American transport on December 15, 1917, until November 5, when she was laid up in Liverpool for her overhauling.

During her service of 23 days, she landed an average of 399 American soldiers on French soil daily, counting her days in port on both sides of the Atlantic and at sea. The average aggregated a little more than a German division of 12,000 men every month. She made nine and a half round trips and transported 9,419 men with their equipment and some cargo on every outward voyage. She had been worked harder than any vessel of her size—54,000 tons—was ever worked before. After her seizure by the United States, naval engineers repaired her machinery damaged by the German crew and made a decided improvement over the original.

The fastest round trip made by the *Leviathan* was seventeen days.

FIND MAN'S SKELETON

The mysterious disappearance of Smith Flohr, an eighty-two-year-old mountaineer of Fountaindale, near Waynesboro, Pa., who had been missing since August 20 and for whom a search covering the Blue Ridge Mountains for miles around has been going on since, was solved when two lumbermen, John Brown and Solomon Monn, while passing through a densely wooded section of the mountains near Old Forge, stumbled across the skeleton of a man. Near by a hat and coat enabled the discoverers of the body to identify it as that of Flohr.

On the day of the old mountaineer's disappearance he had been visiting a son, Irvin S. Flosh, at Mountaindale, and decided toward evening to make his way across to Blue Ridge Summit, where another son, D. S. Flohr, lived. Despite efforts to dissuade him, Flohr started out across the mountains. From that moment until his skeleton was discovered about a mile from the main mountain road, his whereabouts puzzled the countryside. It is now assumed that he became confused, wandered into the thicket and after becoming exhausted, collapsed and later died of starvation.

HOW SAVINGS GROW

Ten dollars a month saved and put out at 4 per cent. compound interest will show an accumulation of $1,475 in ten years; $7.50 a month will show $737; $4.50 a month will show $663; $4 a month will show $589; $3 a month will show $442, and $2.50 a month will show $368, says the *Thrift Magazine*.

Any sum saved and invested at 4 per cent. compound interest will more than double itself in twenty years. Save $10—at the end of the first year you will have $10.40; in five years you will have $12.70. At the end of the tenth year your interest will have grown to $6.20, and at the end of the twentieth year your interest will be $10.70, or more than double your original sum. Carried along on the same basis $100 will become $207, and $1,000 will grow to $2,070.

Save 10 cents a day and in ten years your daily savings will be $365, in addition to $80.30 compound interest, making a total of $445.30.

If you save 15 cents a day for ten years with interest compounded at 4 per cent. you will have $668.18; 20 cents a day will net $890.99; 50 cents a day will mean $2,227.73, and $1 a day will give you a total of $4,445.74.

A CONCRETE ARK

At San Pedro, Cal., an "ark" of concrete, 85 feet long, to transport negro missionaries of the Church of the Living God to Liberia, where they will be able to extol the doctrines of the denomination, is being built by James E. Lewis, pastor of the cult's church in Los Angeles.

The Rev. Mr. Lewis, who is architect and designer and constructor of the quaint craft, calls it the "Colored Missionary Yacht," although residents here refer to it as the "Ark of the Living God." Although he has labored hard for more than a year, performing most of the work himself, Mr. Lewis has only succeeded in constructing the frame of the vessel.

According to his plans an outer and inner shell will be built over this frame and the space between filled with concrete. Mr. Lewis, while stating that the vessel will be principally for transporting negro missionaries of his faith, announced that missionaries of other denominations will be allowed to take passage.

AN ALARM CLOCK LIGHTS THE FIRE

The electric fire-starter makes it unnecessary to get up on a cold morning to light the grate. It is described by J. Wesley Brown, Jr., in the *Electrical Experimenter*.

All that is required is a spark coil of any size, enough batteries to operate the coil, an alarm clock, a battery switch, a box 8x3 inches, a tin pan, two cork-stoppers and two needles. The stoppers are fastened to the bottom of the pan and the needles stuck through the corks, making a spark gap. The gap is connected to the coil and set under the grate. Some rags are bundled up tightly and soaked in gasoline or turpentine and put just under the gap. Over the rags are placed some splinters, and then wood and coal.

The alarm clock is wound and set and a loop put in a string over the alarm thumbscrew on the back of the clock. The other end is attached to a small switch coming from the batteries. The other wire from the batteries goes to the spark coil, and the opposite end of the switch connects to the coil. When the clock goes off, the thumbscrew will revolve, close the switch and start the coil. The spark will light the rags under the grate and start the fire.

HOW A MONKEY ATTACKS A SNAKE

There is on record an interesting example of how a monkey attacks a snake, says *Harper's Weekly*. In this case the serpent was of the most deadly variety, the cobra. The cobra was coiled up on the ground under a tree. The monkey slowly left his perch in the forks of the tree, and quietly, with great caution, moved downward until he had approached within about two feet of the reptile.

He moved his head from side to side, as if closely inspecting the object before him. Then he took a firmer hold of the tree with one arm and wrapped his tail closely around the trunk.

He reached forth his hand until it was within six or eight inches of the snake, and then quickly withdrew it. The witness who observed this curious scene was for a time in doubt whether the monkey had a realization of the dangerous character of its adversary. The little fellow seemed unknowingly to be playing with death.

The hand of the monkey again moved toward the venomous reptile. It looked as if it was going to seize the snake. The supposition was correct, for suddenly, like a flash of lightning, the monkey grasped the cobra around the neck, close to the head, in such a manner that it could not bite, while the snake's body encircled the monkey's arm.

An extraordinary scene followed. The snake hissed loudly, the monkey chattered and screeched and danced and leaped in frantic delight. He would cease now and then in his wild contortions and seriously examine the snake's head and eyes and protruding tongue. Then he would dance about again.

When he had enough of this sport, he began to rub the head of the serpent on the hard ground, continuing this work for some time, with repeated solemn inspections of the progress of his task. Finally he had rubbed the head of the cobra entirely off. Then with much gleeful chattering, he dropped the writhing body and scampered away to join his companions.

SURGEONS 6,000 YEARS AGO

Dr. F. M. Sandwith, Consulting Surgeon to the Khedive, lecturing at Kensington Town Hall, London, said the first surgeon of whom he could find any record lived at the time of the fifth Egyptian dynasty, and must have been Court Doctor to the Pharaohs some 4,000 years ago before Christ.

The first surgical implements of which anything was known, said Dr. Sandwith, were splints found in the Nubian Desert. In one place a graveyard was found, and here were remains of bodies with fractured limbs that had been set with bark splints. One was a right thigh-bone in position by a workmanlike splint and bandages. All the knots were true reef-knots, and the wrappings showed how the strips of palm-fiber cloth were set just as a good surgeon would set them nowadays, so as to use the full strength of the fabric.

In other cases, said Dr. Sandwith, bodies were found with compound fractures, where the broken ends of the bone had broken through the skin. Death seemed to have come very quickly after an accident of this kind, for no trace of healing of the bones was to be found.

A DOLLAR IN HIS HEAD

John Crickmore, of Omaha, Ark., is one man in the State who will never be totally broke. He will always have at least $1 "on his person."

Unfortunately for John, however, this dollar will never be available as a cash asset or medium of exchange, for it lies, not in his pocket, but in the front part of his head under the scalp, and covers a jagged hole in his skull more than two inches long and an inch wide.

Crickmore is just recovering from this dangerous wound, which he received in a fight several days ago and which nearly ended his life.

Dr. W. A. Butts was called to attend the wounded man. His condition was dangerous. The projected and frontal bones of the skull were crushed in against the brain. The physician made an incision in the scalp and removed the bone. He had to have something to cover the opening and to protect the brain. The patient was in too critical a condition to be removed to a city hospital, and there was no time to order a silver plate.

The doctor did the next best thing. He made one. He took a silver dollar and a hammer and beat it out on a piece of iron to fit the hole. He placed this home-made plate in place and sewed up the scalp. In an interview with Dr. Butts, he says his patient is recovering nicely and that his mind is not impaired by the accident or the operation.

IS THIS THE MISSING LINK?

The Paris *Figaro* gives an account of a recent remarkable discovery of paintings in a prehistoric cave of South France. In particular a sketch has been found of a man who went about on all fours and possessed a tail. The account runs in part:

"Count Begouen and his sons discovered on the walls of the subterranean galleries some engravings estimated to be 30,000 years old, and in such quantity and variety that the extraordinary ensemble of prehistoric art work constitutes a veritable museum.

"The animals figured in the cave are considerable in number and include reindeers, bisons, horses, both isolated and in groups; bears, elephants and rhinoceroses. The representations of felines are very rare in prehistoric art, but MM. Begouen have photographed in their cave a genuine lion, executed in bas-relief. They have made out also several birds, including swans, ducks, as well as three predatory night-flyers.

"The human figure is likewise represented in the cave which, in recognition of the sons of Count Begouen, has been baptized 'the Cave of the Three Brothers.' A silhouette is particularly remarkable—almost baffling. It represents a man in motion—a man of powerful body, whose head and shoulders are joined by an enormous neck, a man whose upper and lower limbs and whose hands and feet are perfectly human, but whose vertebral column is prolonged in an exterior appendage resembling that of the antropoids."

STUNG BY A "TREE"

The following is a story told by James Sibree in his book, "A Naturalist in Madagascar." It concerns the so-called agy tree, which is not a tree at all, but a climbing plant:

Walking under some trees and pushing aside the reeds and grass, I was startled by a sudden tingling and pricking sensation over the backs of my hands and fingers. I stopped in sudden surprise, for the pain was severe, and I had touched nothing except the grass. But in another minute the pain increased, the tingling, burning sensation seemed to be extending rapidly to my wrists, and I could see nothing to cause it. As I lowered my head to look, scalding pain shot into my ears and neck, and grew worse every instant. Dazed and bewildered, I stood a few seconds in helplessness, for I could neither see nor guess at the cause of the terrible distress. Then I got back to my company with agony written plain enough on every line of my face.

The men started up when they saw me, crying out: "You have been stung by the agy!" Some of them led me to a seat, others rushed for water from the river, and two or three brought sand heaped up in their hands. Then they chafed me with the sand and water to take out the stinging hairs, which they knew caused the mischief. As they rubbed me, I felt the pain abate, and after they had chafed me for about a quarter of an hour I was comparatively free from pain. While the men were rubbing me, I was able to discern to some extent the cause of my distress. Countless hairs, like tiny little arrows, almost transparent, pointed at either end, and from a third to a fourth of an inch long, had dropped on me in an invisible shower from the agy tree as I stood under it. Before I came away that afternoon, very cautiously I ventured to examine the tree at a little distance and found that the tiny hairs grew outside a thickish pod or shell, not quite so large as a small banana. The pods were fully ripe (unluckily for me) just at that time, and the light wind was scattering their coverings.

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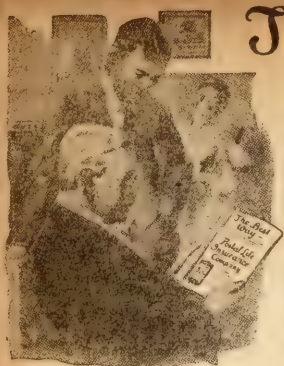

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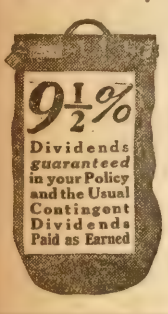

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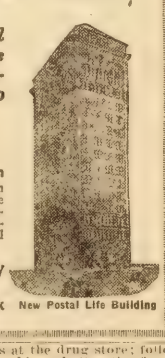
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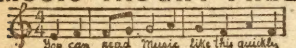

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